
S E R M O N S.

S E R M O N S

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S E R M O N S

FOR

C H I L D R E N ;

BEING A COURSE OF FIFTY-TWO,
ON

S U B J E C T S

SUITED TO THEIR TENDER AGE, AND IN A STYLE
ADAPTED TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF

THE RISING GENERATION:

BEING AN ATTEMPT

TO COUNSEL AND IMPROVE THE HEART, BY
OCCUPYING THE IMAGINATION.

WITH A HYMN ANNEXED TO EACH DISCOURSE;

THE WHOLE

By the Reverend MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. I.

DELIGHTFUL TASK !

THOMPSON'S SEASONS.

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXXIX.

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(11)

To the BISHOP of LONDON.

MY LORD,

I BEG I may introduce, under the immediate shelter of your name, to public observation, the succeeding Manual, being an attempt to please and benefit the Rising Generation. Your benevolence, I dare persuade myself, will not consider it with less regard, because the objects it pretends to teach, are of a very tender age. Your Lordship has too real a solicitude for all the souls committed to your care, that the instruction of those little ones, who will in future time be men or women, if God's providence but spares them, should be unimportant to you. I could wish indeed, that as the object of this publication is so noble, my abilities had
a been

been adapted to it; as it is, it needs the benefit of some great name, with which your public character supplied me. Condescend to pardon then the freedom I have taken, and accept this tribute of respect from one who never could indeed aspire to such an honour as the circumstance of being known in any manner to your Lordship, but who formerly received his ordination from the hands of your distinguished predecessor, in the see to which God's providence has called you. I inscribe myself, with great respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
dutiful, and humble servant,
MARK ANTHONY MEILAN.

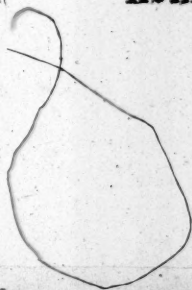
Dartmouth-Street, Westminster,
January 1st, 1789.

P R E F A C E.

THE author of the following tracts submits them to the candor of the public and his friends, with all humility. He cannot but be sensible of their defects. The motive, notwithstanding, that induced him to compose them, he persuades himself, is laudable. They are not written for the eye of criticism; upon which account, he hopes the errors in them will be overlooked by those who have already patronized him much beyond his insufficient merits. To their kind consideration he submits himself, whose condescending aid, he hopes, will be extended to him as to one, who though he does not write for bread,
yet

yet wishes by his labour to encrease the means with which God's providence has furnished him for the subsistence of a family by no means small. It is a consolation to him, that his pen has never been employed to hurt a single individual; and his publication will, he hopes, be favourably looked on by those parents who consider the improvement of their little ones in virtue, as a matter of the greatest consequence. As one engaged in the profession of a teacher, he has spent his life, as he may say, with children, and had many opportunities of noticing their different dispositions. Children naturally love to read. This love, a world of writers have assayed to gratify; and hence that inundation of such works as have for many years been pouring in upon us. He intends not to depreciate their merits: many of them, in their kind, are excellent; but still they are no more than fiction. May not then the truths, contained

tained in these discourses, recommend them? Reputable people always take their children with them, when they go to public worship; but the exhortations there delivered to that portion of the congregation who are come to years of reason and reflexion, cannot certainly be understood by *them*; and if they could, can scarce be relished. they want something to delight the fancy, and so fix their volatility. How far these Sermons, which are meant for parents, governesses, friends, or tutors to read over to them, when at home, will answer such a purpose, must be left to their decision. Should the author take upon him to determine such a question, it would seem an arrogance, (at least he thinks so) of such nature, that the candour of his readers should not be expected to forgive it. Some may very likely say, that many passages in all these Sermons are above the comprehension.



henfion of thofe little ones they were
 compofed for. Doubtlefs there are many
 that would feem in fome fort dark;
 but then the author judges, that thefe
 Sermons, fhould they gain admiffion
 into boarding fchools and private
 houfes, will be generally *read* to
 thofe they are defigned to teach,
 and then the benefit of accent, tone,
 and emphasis will obviate all ob-
 fcurity. He therefore hopes fincerely,
 that the public will approve a work
 that has not been compofed without
 a deal of labour on the author's
 part; and if they think it meritorious,
 he requests the benefit and honour of
 their good report, to fuch as may be-
 nevolently wifh to imitate their kind
 example, in fubfcribing to it. Their
 affiftance may contribute to his hap-
 pinefs, when Time, (if Providence
 fhould fpare him), has brought down
 the ftrength effential to fupport the toil
 of that profeflion God firft called him
 to,

to, and when of course he will be incapacitated from instructing any more. The favours of his friends, with intimation of such gentlemen or ladies as desire to have the work, may be directed to him, at his house, as underwritten, or to either of the publishers. There can be no necessity for lengthening out this preface. He concludes with wishing every reader of his publication health and happiness; and to his bountiful subscribers in particular; a list of whom will be inserted in the third and final volume: he returns his cordial thanks for all the favours shewn him, and shall ever recollect them with respect and gratitude, as they deserve.

M. A. M.

*Dartmouth-Street,
Jan. 1st, 1789.*

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SERMONS FOR CHILDREN.

SERMON I. ON A PROPER EDUCATION.

PROVERBS XXII. v. 6.

*Train up a child in the way he should go; and
when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

SOLOMON might well say so, dear little friends, since every thing is imitation, that is, practice; not alone in human learning, or the learning which will qualify you to appear with credit in this world; but likewise in that science which is called the science of salvation, which will fit you for a future state in heaven. Yes, every thing is imitation; and the child of tenderest years, and consequently tenderest apprehension, has sufficient understanding to conceive the meaning of the text, and see the truth thereof. In all the arts you learn, it will be imitation only; or, to call it by the other name

VOL. I.

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we

we just now mentioned, practice, which can make you perfect. In the business of the needle, of the pen or pencil, you must know, without our intimation, that your little hands, by frequently employing those three instruments, and by no other method, will, at last, obtain you a dexterity and skill in using them. In music, what but the repeated exercise you give your little fingers on the keys or chords, can qualify you? In the fashionable recreation of the dance, what but the frequent motion of your little feet will give you grace and dignity? In these it can be nothing but a close attention to your teachers, with the frequent imitation of whatever they may do, by way of pattern or example, that must tend to your improvement, and complete the man or woman; such as we presume you will be found, on coming forth into the world: and in the languages, what progress would you make, or, to employ a more expressive word, what readiness would you acquire, but for the constant practice of your little tongues, while speaking to each other in those languages, which is a work not less, but even more essential than the study of their several grammar-rules?

So

So likewise in the science of salvation; in that science, every parent, governess, or tutor, should with pride and pleasure teach you, imitation only can complete the real christian, and preserve you in that sweet simplicity which is the ornament and privilege of childhood:—imitation only, little friends, can make the love of God and man habitual to you. And if so, how easy will it be for you, and others in your situation, while you pass some portion of the spring-tide of your being in the acquisition of such arts as constitute the man of learning, or well educated woman—easy we repeat, to gain those more exalted arts that make a virtuous character, a dutious child, a kind relation, a good parent, a compassionating friend in this world, and, of course, an heir to everlasting happiness in heaven? We say again, how easy will it be for you, and others in your situation, to adopt that imitation which alone can train the child to arts and virtue? No one, possibly can make provision for his present happiness, or that which he would wish to find in future, by a way so easy or infallible.

For ever bear in mind then the advice of Solomon, who counsels those entrusted with the care of youth, to train them up in such a way

as they should go, because the consequence will be, that when grown old, they will not leave it. Let this admonition be at all times present to your little minds; and that, on your part, no obstruction may impede its operation to your benefit, submit, with chearfulness, to every task your teachers lay upon you. They deserve it; for the business of instruction is an arduous one, even when they have to work upon the happiest dispositions. And how various too are not their duties; to attend not only on the ornamental province of your education, but instruct you in the rules of Christian wisdom, in the absolute necessity you all are under of returning, as it were, to the Almighty in your gratitude, what every day you are receiving from his fatherly and overflowing goodness. The result of such discreet instruction will be this; that your enjoyments, in a state of man or womanhood, will not consist in that superior fortune you may possibly be born to; for in that case, few, compared with the amazing multitude of men, would be reserved to any species of enjoyments; but in contemplations of the good you do your fellow creatures, be it great or little; so that all, in this particular, are on a level with you; since you know the widow's

widow's mite was more acceptable to God than any of the rich men's offerings: and still more, that in the midst of all those unavailing and superfluous things surrounding affluent people, it will be your interest to look upon salvation as the only matter, the one thing, as Jesus Christ says, needful.

This one needful thing, if you endeavour to become possessed of in the season of your childhood, how supremely happy will you not, on all occasions, find yourself amid a world of vice, and consequently sorrow! If, in some sort, like the little Samuel, when God speaks through your instructors, you reply, *Speak, Lord, for I, thy servant, hear thee*: If betimes you mortify or kill, in their first principles, those sinful habits we are born to: if your little tongues, that can, at present, scarce do more than lisp the language of your wants to God, should, in a future season, be habituated to the work of supplication, while you make it, as it were, the business of your lives to pray, when you are qualified to pray with understanding, as you ought, and if your bosoms overflow with all that gratitude to the Almighty for his goodness, which should be the happy consequence ensuing from a christian education: if, in short, when

having once attained that happy consequence, you let not in the sequel your good principles become corrupted by the poison of the world, how truly enviable will not your condition be acknowledged! Those who, as the text expresses it, have thus been early trained to goodness, will not, when grown old, be liable to quit it. Nor is this the whole; for with what liberty and pleasure will they not pursue their way to heaven! The rules of temperance and moderation will not, in the least, restrain them. They will serve the Almighty from a docile inclination, not with agitated bosoms; and whenever any passion rises in them, which their reason disapproves of, it will be repressed immediately.

But on the other hand, dear little friends, this will not be the lot of those who have not known the blessing of a virtuous education in their infancy, or have neglected it: for if, when come to their maturity, they should be happily disposed towards righteousness, what thorns will they not find obstruct the path-way into which they enter! What a multitude of enemies to their salvation will they not be forced to combat! They will have a formidable band of passions to engage with, prejudices to encounter, vices to eradicate

eradicate, and habits of offence to conquer. Men thus circumstanced, are, in particular, required to mortify their natures; and, as Scripture says, to cut off a right arm, or pluck an eye out, granting either, as will surely be the case in their unhappy state, should happen to offend them.

But we turn from this distressing picture; and by this time having said enough upon the subject of salvation—arguments on which you are not every one enabled fully to conceive the scope of, shall proceed to speak of matters much more suited to your understanding; namely, your incumbent duty to accomplish the immediate purpose of your parents in bestowing, as they do, an education on you. Upon which, we have to say, that as it must be owned your duty to remember your Creator in the time of youth, for the attainment of eternal happiness, so too there is another species of remembrance necessary for your comfortable situation in the world, when you are men or women: what we mean is, the attainment of those several arts in human learning you are made to study. Let not any one among you say: “But
 “I am rich, and when grown up, shall have a
 “fortune to procure from others every service I

"have need of: why then should I puzzle and
"perplex my brain with knowledge? It may be
"of use to those that have their maintenance to
"get."—It may indeed; to such then let us, in
the first place, recommend a perseverance in
their studies: it will be a fortune to them: but
as no one is so rich, but he may come to po-
verty, let all of you conceive it indispensably
your duty to obtain that knowledge, which,
unless you have, you cannot possibly be said to
have received a proper education: or, dear little
friends, if, as may likely be the case, in your
aversion to the work of study, caused by an idea
that the fortune of your parents will exempt
you from the need of taking up a business or
profession;—if, we say, your pride may urge
you forward, where your sense of duty and pro-
priety is found a languid monitor, let us con-
jure you to perform, for honour's sake, what
others, of a lower rank perhaps, will do from
motives of necessity; and then you will not lose
the inestimable opportunity of making every
possible improvement in your learning. What
the necessary branches of that learning are to
every individual of you, we will not presume
to ascertain. The wise man does not ascertain
it in the text himself: *the way a child should go,*

he says; and different ways are suited, as we know, to different minds. We leave the part of such decision to your master, governors, and parents. All our wish is, to be thought possessed of great good-will to children, not consummate knowledge to direct their education: and much rather would we please their little hearts with such expressions as the tenderest love makes use of, than address their understanding with the gravity of wisdom, were it even greater than king Solomon's.

But if, in our regard and value for you, being, as you are, among the number of the rising generation, whom from intercourse with many hundreds, as a Teacher, we can truly say, we love exceedingly, as well as in our zeal to further your advantage, we had ventured on the talk of ascertaining what peculiar parts of knowledge suited you respectively; we mean as being destined to appear in various walks of life when men or women; should we have supposed ourselves in any need of asking pardon for such conduct, as if parents, and the candid part of those who have the instruction of the rising world devolved upon them, should take umbrage at our love for those with whom they are themselves in love; and more particularly,

when we shew it in a way so perfectly consistent with our calling and profession? Can a man of common feelings be insensible of the affection children are, or should be viewed with? For, in God's name, what can be more lovely than those tender buds of human nature? Children are like rising suns, that cherish or delight the eye without offending, in their infancy at least, or dazzling it. The parent thinks he sees in their complacent countenance an earnest of his future happiness in having such a heritage, and easily persuades himself he can discern, in all their little actions, the foundation of his hopes respecting their docility: this feeling of the parent is not only *his*, but common to the rest of men, in whom the pleadings of humanity and nature must be heard for little ones, than whom there cannot be more amiable objects. In maturer life indeed, they may inspire beholders with respect, but in the time of childhood, when their features are suffused with innocence and sweetness, and their tender minds or understandings open to the voice of truth, they make impressions of affection on the hearts of such as have continual opportunities of being near them; and more so, upon the hearts of those that have their education trusted to them: their

their affection being heightened by the hope they cherish of becoming one day or another instrumental to the happiness their pupils will themselves enjoy, if Providence assists their laudable endeavours, and which happiness they will communicate to those they have to do with.

Little ones, what can we argue from but what we feel within us? These emotions of affection for the rising generation, does your preacher every day experience in his bosom; and the experience of it makes all pleasant round about him. Thanks to so endearing a society, he has avoided all the little crosses and anxieties that generally are attendant on the happiest life; and thanks to Providence, he has not been reserved to suffer any of this life's calamities. He thought it not improper to inform his little friends thus far, that they might know the character and temper of the person who has undertaken to instruct them in the Sermons that compose this manual, with his right to offer them instruction. His affection is his right to such a conduct. Take then the instruction he attempts to give you in good part. He uses nothing but the voice of calm persuasion, and will never glance at punishment if you deny

him your attention. He is come your friend, to lead you by the hand, and not your master, to intimidate or awe you.

We repeat then once again what this discourse began with; namely, that from imitation, not alone in human knowledge, but in heavenly wisdom also, we arrive at excellence. The précept, therefore, of the text is very apposite, and will, if you permit its operation in the proper way, redound to your advantage; since a life of virtue will become habitual to you. May the truths you have at present heard be so engrafted in you, as to bring forth fruit in future! May you every one afford yourself a shining instance of improvement in the several arts and sciences you are at present put to learn, and of submission to the teachers that direct you! But as these two purposes you cannot, of yourselves, that is without God's grace, accomplish, let us pray in your behalf to HIM who is the giver of good things to every human being, and do you, on your part, join sincerely in the supplication.

Gracious God, bestow upon this little flock of thine, the blessing of thy grace and favour; let them grow up safe beneath the wing of thy protection. Let them, even in these their earliest
years,

years, enjoy the happy liberty peculiar to thy children. Let no harm befall their state of innocence; for do not angels always, as Christ Jesus says, behold thy face in their behalf, and is not heaven their heritage? Bestow the blessing of a proper understanding on them to improve in knowledge, and vouchsafe thy favour to the hand that trains them up in virtue; that the way they ought to walk in may be opened to them; and at last, when they come forth into the world, continue them thy grace, that they may never quit that way. Hear us, we pray thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son. *Amen.*

THE HYMN.

BLESS'D be the God of grace and love,
That will'd us to be born
Of parents, whose thrice happy state
So many gifts adorn.

While other children, wanting food,
Roam naked in the street,
We have our meal-times, and are cloth'd
From head to foot complete.

While

While other children have no friend
Their infant minds to train;
Left, as they are, to lye, cheat, thief,
And take thy name in vain:

Safe here from such infection, we
May virtue's path-way take;
And every day, in learning too,
Some further progress make.

Then let that body, which with clothes
Thou cover'st from the air,
And daily feed'st with large supplies
Of such refreshing fare,

This, and that mind which of thy love
May hourly knowledge gain,
Let both, uniting in thy praise,
Pour out their grateful strain.

Lord, blefs our parents; may thy grace
Safe lead their steps life through;
And when they die,—in other worlds
May they be happy too.

S E R M O N II.

O N C H R I S T M A S D A Y.

MATTHEW i. v. 21.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.

WHAT sins are those here mentioned, dear disciples, of the people appertaining, as the text expresses it, to Jesus, or the son of God; or when were they contracted, so that all men are polluted by them, as no doubt you have been told? Alas! in the beginning; almost, though not quite, six thousand years ago; for God, about that period, made the world; and our first parents, who soon after their creation disobeyed God's voice, brought misery upon themselves, and all who were to issue from them. God, however, who is much more merciful than just, commiserating their unhappy situation, victims as they were to death, and utterly incapable of happiness hereafter, promised them a Saviour in due course
of

of time, and of the woman our first mother's seed; by which it should be brought about, that one of the descendants of that Eve, whose sin had been the ruin of mankind, should afterwards bring forth a son to make atonement for mankind. This Saviour is that Jesus mentioned in the text, who by his death was to efface the sins of all men living in the world before his time, that should be inwardly persuaded such a Saviour would at last appear, and live accordingly; as well as all men living after his appearance in the flesh, that should acknowledge him the Saviour, and direct their life and conduct, like the first, consistently with such acknowledgment.

And yet though God had issued such a gracious promise, children were no sooner born to Adam and his spouse, than all the miserable consequences of that sin they had themselves committed against God, appeared; their elder son, when they had only two, conceiving in his heart the horrible design of killing his unhappy brother,—a design which he effected. Judge, dear little ones, of their afflicted parents' feelings by the state, in which yours certainly would be, if any one among you were to kill your brother or your sister.

This

This was the first crime committed after Adam and his wife's original offence, of which we meet with any mention; tho' undoubtedly they were continually sinning, since their nature was incapable of any virtue in itself. Accordingly, the guilt of Adam's children and *their* children multiplied exceedingly, and came at last to such a height, that God repented he had made the world; and sixteen hundred years, or nearly, after its creation, brought a flood upon the earth, that drowned every creature having breath, except eight people, namely, Noah, with his wife and family; and pairs or couples of all brutes, who were preserved within an ark which Noah, seeing he had lived a virtuous life, or rather been less wicked than the rest of men, received command from God to build.

No sooner had the flood subsided, and the waters sunk again into their proper beds, than Noah, with the creatures he had saved, came forth, when the Almighty blessed him, promising he would not any more destroy the world by water; and that men might be assured of this his promise, he would ever afterward, when heavy showers came down from heaven, hang out his rain-bow in the clouds.

But

But such, dear children, was the wickedness of man, that all the dreadful consequences of the flood were soon forgot, and sin increased as much as formerly. God saw this progress of iniquity, but bearing constantly in mind the promise of a Saviour he had made mankind, now set about preparing for the great event. Four hundred years had passed by this time since the flood, when God determined to select a nation, who should serve him; and, as founder of this nation, he was pleased to fix upon that Abraham, whose affecting story, with regard to his intent of sacrificing Isaac, his own son, I doubt not you have read or heard related. Abraham, therefore, by the special will of the Almighty, fix'd his dwelling in the land of Canaan, which was promised to his seed; with this additionally glorious circumstance, that from his loins, in future, should proceed that Saviour by whose means mankind were to be blessed.

By way of keeping this selected nation separate from the rest of men, he ordered circumcision; and two hundred years, or nearly after, Joseph, Jacob's son was born; which Jacob, some of you may know, was Abraham's grand child. Joseph got the hatred of his brothers,
who

who were base enough to sell him for a slave, pretending to their father some wild beast must have devoured him. Joseph, by his purchasers, was carried down to Egypt, where he came to honour, having by his skill interpreted two visions of king Pharaoh, that portended seven years' famine after seven years' plenty. Joseph was, on this, promoted to be governor in Egypt, and lay up the corn; that in the famine, there might be no want: but God was pleased to make this famine felt beyond the land of Egypt, and it spread to Canaan. Jacob, hearing there was corn in Egypt, sent his sons to purchase what they wanted, who were introduced to Joseph, little thinking who he was; tho' he at once remembered them. The consequence of such a meeting was, that he forgave them, and brought down his father into Egypt, where he settled with his family, thro' Pharaoh's liberality.

One age and half another passed away, when there arose a king in Egypt who oppressed the Jews; for so were Abraham's offspring called, from Judah, one of Jacob's children; and of whom, descended as he was from Abraham, Jesus, or the Saviour, was to come. The Jews by this time had increased surprisngly, and therefore,

fore, to prevent their further progress, all the new born males were to be drowned by the monarch's order. It was now God's providence thought proper to lead forth his people, for he called them so, that they might take possession of that Canaan he had promised he would give the seed of Abraham; and by Moses, one who had been saved from drowning, did he bring them out; first visiting, however, the Egyptian king, who would not otherwise have let them go, with ten tremendous plagues; tho' after all, the Jews no sooner had departed; than his heart was once more hardened, so that he pursued them. When they reached the Red Sea's banks, God ordered Moses to stretch forth his rod. He did so; and its waves divided, making them a passage: they went over safely, and the Egyptians followed; but when once the Jews were got upon the other side, the waves, by God's command, returned, and their pursuers perished.

From the ocean they went forward, being fed by God with manna for the space of forty years, till they had gained the borders of the promised country. In the progress of these forty years, God gave them his commandments, cut in stone. . On their arrival in the land of Canaan, they had many wars to wage, which
were

were attended, sometimes, with defeat, and sometimes with success, as they were disobedient to his will on one hand, or obedient on the other; for, at times, they were exceedingly ungrateful and rebellious. God at first appointed judges to rule over them, till grown quite weary of such government, they wished to have a king. A king at last was granted them. This king was Saul; and after him came David; not by virtue of his birth-right, but thro' God's appointment. Now this David was another in the line from Abraham, whence the Saviour should descend. A progeny of kings succeeded David, in whose reign no circumstances happened that need here be spoken of; till in the end, when nearly fifteen hundred years were passed since their deliverance from oppression in the land of Egypt, Rome, that had already conquered what was then considered the whole world, annexed the country of the Jews, videlicet, Judea, to the number of their conquests, over which they placed a king called Herod, who assumed his government about the space of forty years before the time when, by the providence of God, the Saviour should be born.

There was in Nazareth, a town or village of Judea, such is the vicissitude or change of greatness

greatness in the world, a man of little estimation with respect to wealth, but of a virtuous life, called Joseph, who was, notwithstanding, lineally sprung from David; and this Joseph, near about the time when Jesus should be born, had married a young woman of the greatest character for virtue and integrity, whose name was Mary; but before they came together, God dispatched his angel to admonish Joseph in a dream that Mary had been some time pregnant by the operation of his holy spirit, and should soon bring forth a son, as mentioned in the text. All this was at its proper time accomplished; and the son of God appeared among us, sprung, as just now intimated, of a virgin, who, as well as Joseph, that had married her, was very poor. The Saviour then, as it appears, was born in poverty; and from this circumstance, we take occasion, having got thus far with our discourse which has been nothing but a sort of history, to give you some instruction, little friends, upon the benefit you are to draw from contemplating on the birth of Jesus Christ.

He was, as we have said already, born in poverty; and as in those discourses, we have drawn you up for what is called *Good Friday*, you will see he likewise lived in poverty.

Such

Such, little hearers, was the scheme of God's salvation here below, that while the Saviour's death atoned for all past sins committed by mankind, his life might be a pattern, which the poor, as well as rich, should have it in their power to imitate; and which by doing, sin would have no more dominion in the world, or not so much as formerly.

This pattern therefore follow, dear disciples. Can you possibly have one more glorious or effectual than that furnished by the son of God, in his obedience to, and absolute dependance on, his heavenly father? We might here, without the least degree of impropriety, go on to teach you how, from his example, you might frame your own obedience to, and absolute dependance on, this heavenly father; but we chuse at present, to select such arguments as may conduce to make you rather better children, than good christians; for hereafter, being grounded in your duty as good children, you will much more easily discharge your duty as good christians; or, in other words, you will ascend from that degree of love which cannot but inspire obedience and dependance,—from that love, we say, you entertain within you for an earthly parent, whom you see continually, to that love
you

you ought to entertain within you for that heavenly parent whom you cannot, nor will ever see, as long as you are here among your fellow creatures in the flesh.

We say then, that the obedience to, and absolute dependance on, your earthly parents, which on this occasion we would teach you, is a highly necessary, and a highly glorious matter. In the first place, it is highly necessary, since that Jesus Christ might show you his obedience to, and absolute dependance on, his heavenly father, all the laws of nature were inverted, that is, changed: and in the next place, it is highly glorious, since the blessed son of God, in his own person, condescended to afford us an example of it.

Highly necessary first; for not to speak of love which renders every duty easy, granting parents should be sometimes rather harsh, tho' never cruel, in their mode of government; and granting, that to be obedient and dependant on them, you must thwart your inclination, and do many things you would not like to do, yet still these are no arguments against your duty; for consider Jesus Christ just come into the world and lying in a manger; and consider likewise, that to bring about this situation of a
God

God thus putting on humanity, and coming in the garb of poverty among us, it was necessary that the laws of nature, as just now we mentioned, should be all inverted; while to put you in a proper situation for obedience and dependance, it is barely necessary that your inclination, as we likewise just now mentioned, should be thwarted. Which then is the greater difficulty? To obtain an answer to this question, ask yourselves. Suppose, however, that the greater difficulty lies with you, which is by no means true, and that to thwart your inclinations is a grievous violence imposed upon you;—are you yet to know, dear children, that those inclinations, if not thwarted by your parents, governors, or tutor, would become your tyrants? Miserable little ones! what would become of you, without controul? You must be under the direction and restraint of some superior, otherwise your youthful pleasures would become so many torments. In a word, no tyrant would be half so domineering as yourselves. From such harsh tyranny, there can be nothing save obedience to, and absolute dependance on, your parents, comprehending those they have appointed to direct you, that can set your heart and understanding free. Yield therefore to the

precepts that inculcate such obedience and dependance; for to do so, is a highly necessary duty.

But this *highly necessary*, does not much encourage you to be observant of that duty. The necessity, you may indeed be well aware of, and consider it an iron chain. What, therefore, if we seek to draw you, in the next place, by a golden chain; the idea of that glory, such a duty comprehends, and strenuously assert, that nothing in the world can be more glorious than obedience to, and absolute dependance on, your parents? And why so? Because no less a person than the son of God himself, gave proof of his obedience and dependance. You then, children more remarkable than your companions for the opulence and elevation of those parents you are come of, we affectionately call upon you to consider seriously the spirit of this truth, that nothing in itself can be so glorious, as to hold, beneath your parents, that subordinate, or lower place by nature meant you, namely, that of children. They who should mistake that place, would like the prodigal, by Jesus mentioned in the parable, do nothing but bring down upon themselves the ruin and confusion they deserved. And hence, the misery of those unthinking children

children whom the love of their indulgent parents has in some sort authorised to say, *give me the portion of those goods belonging to me*; but who afterwards are brought by their unnatural conduct to cry out:—*how many servants of my father have more bread than they can eat, while I am perishing for want!*

Oh! the abundant foresight of God's wisdom! for, dear children, who would have imagined, that in days so ancient and remote as those of the creation, when his mercy promised a redeemer,—who would have imagined, we repeat, that such redeemer, by his coming, would supply you with a model of behaviour towards your parents? It is, notwithstanding, so. Pursue it therefore; and may God, by whose mysterious providence it came to pass that our redeemer, in his infant days, and even at the time he came into the world, did good by that example he afforded, may that God enable you so to avail yourself thereof, that your first youth, at least, may be productive of delight and satisfaction to your parents, while the youth of many, too, too many, causes misery to theirs. May you, as he approved himself, be subject to them; and [at length, if in the days of their decline, they stand in need of your support and

may you haste to their assistance, as becomes good children and good christians. Be it so, thro' Jesus Christ, &c.

T H E H Y M N.

LORD, when this universe began,
And thy almighty power fram'd man,
From sin was he created free,
And meant for happiness and thee:
But soon, from happiness he fell
And thee, into the depths of hell.

Yet, notwithstanding this offence,
Thy love, not less than pow'r immense,
In pity of his state forlorn,
Decreed a Saviour should be born
Of human loins; thine only son,
To suffer for what man had done.

To suffer life's worst ills, that we,
From sin, so graciously set free,
Might live to righteousness again,
And our lost heirship re-obtain,
That heirship to eternal bliss
In the next world, we lost in this,

And

And lo! the long-wish'd day appears:
The Saviour comes! a child of tears!
I see him in a manger laid!
God's only son, thus human made,
To live a life of pain, and then
Die for the sins of thankless men.

Oh! may his life my model be;
And may I breathe, great God, for thee:
To those, from whom my birth I drew,
May I, like him, be subject too;
Live as he liv'd, and when I die,
Hail my redemption then drawn nigh.

S E R M O N III.
ON THE NEW YEAR.

I CORINTHIANS, vii. v. 29.

The time is short.

AND yet you frequently complain, dear little friends, that it is very long and tedious in its passage: as for instance, when you wait in anxious expectation of those sweet half-yearly holidays that give you liberty from study, and dismiss you to enjoy the company and conversation of your friends. So many weeks, you say, before that happy Midsummer or Christmas comes! So many weeks are just so many days; and those among you that can number well enough for such a purpose, fail not, in your puerile expedients to get rid of so immense a load of time, to bring those days as low as into hours, nay sometimes minutes; and, chagrined at the amount, cry out, so many hours, so many minutes previous to our going home! When will they be expired?

But

But, on the other hand, when those so many hours and minutes are expired at length, and the dear object of your expectation come, it might appear you had adopted a new set of notions, since the time, you fancy, is then very short indeed. In fact, the days of your release from troublesome instruction, pass away so very rapidly, that hardly can you say the time is well begun, before it ends; and you return again to study, having scarcely half enjoyed those holidays you were so anxious should arrive.

Now, this we say for your instruction, dear disciples: namely, that your puerile expedients to deceive the lingering time in study, and your notion of the rapid passage of that time in your vacation, are both blameable; and that yourselves alone are to be censured, as yourselves alone experience the uneasiness ensuing from both situations. You are neither happy in the interval of business, while at school, nor are you happy in the interval of relaxation, when at home.

And why? Because in thus desiring the approach of holidays, and thinking them, when once arrived, so rapid in their progress, you are not in the performance of your duty, in the

suitable employment of your time. Young people, that are ardent to get knowledge, find the time not flow enough for what they would go through with; and in thus regretting the quick progress of their time, when they apply it to the work of study, they are naturally led to form a different notion of the time allotted them for recreation, and regret not its quick passage. In a word, they think their time at school not long enough; and when from school, then they consider it not short enough.

The suitable employment, therefore, of your time, is an unfailing antidote, or medicine, to remove all disagreeable ideas of its tardy pace on one hand; and its rapid motion on the other hand: a subject which the present season renders proper for discussion. We have entered now upon another year. The former is entirely done away; and this, so recently begun, will very quickly follow. It requires no argument to prove that time is everlastingly upon the wing. I am at present seven, eight, nine, or ten years old; this many of you possibly may say; but, strictly speaking, not two days together; for to-morrow you must change the expression, and so forward for ten thousand morrows, if your life should comprehend so many.

Of this flux of time you are assured; and yet this very time, for ever on the wing, as we have said already, is the only property or substance God deposits in our hands. We all come first into the world defenceless, destitute, and naked; we have neither speech nor understanding. Nature gives us nothing but a little time, with which we gain successively whatever we possess at any period of our life, and which we had not when we came into the world. Not only wealth and honour, which the farther we advance in years we may increase, but virtue, which no money can procure. It follows then, that nothing should be valued by us more than time; since time is in itself the current price of every thing that can supply our wants.

Since time, then, is so valuable to us all, not less than so extremely fleeting, how are you to regulate your conduct, so that you may make the most thereof? The answer to this question is connected with a common compliment among us, that civility enjoins, when men wish one another, at the opening of the year, a happy new one. Indisputably, the surest way to an enjoyment of such happiness, is previously to have employed the year elapsed,

in virtue ; not to enter on a resolution of employing that which is to pass in virtue ; for the mind can, with much satisfaction and delight, look back and contemplate upon past actions, if those actions have been meritorious ; but the resolution of behaving meritoriously in future, comprehends the pain of needing such a resolution, the uneasiness of thinking we have misbehaved beforehand. Virtue, we repeat, is, in reality, the only medicine for our thoughts : but, little ones, as we have said already, arguments on virtue you are not so capable of understanding : we shall therefore limit our remarks to study ; and accordingly, we say, you will employ that time God's providence vouchsafes you in the worthiest way, if you devote it in the season of your nonage, to the acquisition of ingenious arts and sciences. Yes, children, be persuaded of a truth you have perhaps already heard,—that learning is more excellent than any patrimony or estate. Besides, you cannot honestly employ your time in the pursuit of any other object. Your indulgent parents liberally pay to have you taught, and it would be a fraud to disappoint their expectations. Of whatever sex, then, you may be, dear little friends, employ your time in earnest efforts

efforts to get knowledge. He that has employed his early prime of life in the attainment of this knowledge, from a notion that to do so is his duty, has already laid the ground-work of a greater work, which likewise is established on the basis of that self same duty, namely, the attainment of that knowledge which shall last, when in the words of the apostle, this world's fashion shall be done away.

And yet, the acquisition of this knowledge, which shall be eternal, is not the whole benefit that shall ensue to him who conscientiously devotes his present time to that great work of education. Learning is the instrument whereby rich people keep their fortune and affairs together. Understand us;—we would not be understood to say, that learning is essentially expedient to the wealthy man; but what we mean is this: that as mankind are generally virtuous, or else vicious altogether, so, if wealthy individuals in their youth have not acquired those arts expected from them, they will very likely have become possessed of something else, which will excite them to think lightly of, and dissipate their wealth; and in this point of view we may assert, that learning is the instrument by which rich people keep their fortune and af-

fairs together : but, however that be, learning, we may take upon us to assert, will lead a youth to fortune; and it very rarely happens, in a land of trade, that any of us, and particularly any of the rougher sex, are, from the birth, intended to subsist without some business or profession. He or she, then, that possesses any useful art or science, has the certain means of gaining a subsistence, which the frowns of adverse fortune cannot take away.

For, granting you should doubt it—but the preacher pauses here, and asks himself if he shall publish or suppress the information he designed to give you. Pride might whisper the propriety of caution; but can pride become him, and that pride, particularly, which would teach him to suppress a truth that may be useful to his little hearers? Why are you his friends, and wherefore has he held so many of you to his heart, if now, when he has undertaken to instruct you, he should act on the reserve? You shall not find him such a character. Know then, that in the person preaching, you behold an instance of the benefits deduceable from knowledge. Born to no inheritance, he might have been at present, as he trusts, an honest, (in reality) though yet obscure and common artisan,

tisan, or handicraftsman : but God's providence that gave him, as he hopes he may declare, and not be thought a boaster, since the avowal is intended to promote your benefit, God's providence, he says, that gave him talents, gave him likewise an avidity, or ardent thirst for knowledge in his childhood ; and at present he may truly say, he is no less than what the boast of some small stock of learning, and no other circumstance, has made him—the possessor of a competent subsistence, and considered no unfit companion to consort with gentlefolks. Oh, children, you may think the preacher rather too incautious, and the frank confession he has made unnecessary. It is, notwithstanding, true. Avail yourselves then of the truth, though you should blame him for the avowal of it.

And particularly you, dear little fair ones, whose much softer character, and gentler disposition, naturally win you a much greater measure of affection than the other sex, and whom himself has consequently cherished with a greater strength of inclination ; you, for whom, or (as to speak a little more precisely, he should say,) for several of whom he has not hesitated in the least to alienate or part with some small portion of his slender substance in the world, that he might

might please your little fancies, well rewarded, as he thought he was, if in return he might procure himself a smile, and gaze thereon, while he observed it brighten features that were bright enough already; you, for whose advantage he has not alone increased the toil of a profession, in itself sufficiently laborious, by gratuitous instruction of his own accord bestowed upon you, but denied himself a hundred little comforts, that the saving made by such curtailments of *his* pleasure, might be all applied to give *you* pleasure. You, in fine, that while the other sex may possibly afford the happy promise of one charm or two in their maturity, the charm of virtue, and that manliness which shall command the persons of your fellow beings; you, he says, that while the other sex afford the promise just now spoken of, hold out another, not alone of virtue, but those thousand womanly attractions that hereafter shall command the affections of your fellow beings, and which every one will own a nobler sort of empire, you, particularly, once again he says, dear little fair ones, be you eager to employ the opportunity allowed you, and endeavour, by a laudable employment of the present time, to make as much improvement as you can in all those

those arts that constitute a proper female education. Oh! the undescribable advantages you will enjoy yourselves, and the unspeakable delight your parents will receive from seeing you, while watered with the dews of heaven, bring forth a harvest of rich fruit in its perfection. One not only of that human learning we now speak of, but as well too of that heavenly science which shall last eternally, and which is scarcely separable from the other, when young people give their time up to the work of study, from a conscientious principle of answering the just expectation of their parents, since this latter virtue comprehends the former! What advantages on one hand, and delight upon the other, he repeats, when you give proof within you of a thousand commendable habits! Of that piety which has resort to God in all its wants and sufferings! Of that modesty which admirably serves to keep your sex within the limits of a rigid virtue! Of that prudence which shall qualify you to distinguish truth from falsehood! Of those elevated thoughts that shall enable you to bear both evil and good fortune! Of that tenderness and pity which shall make you sensible of any the least misery you see a fellow creature suffering! And that uniform attention you shall

shall pay on all occasions to give every one his own, and do for others all the good you can confer upon them ! These inestimable virtues, which the generality of men and women practise only after long experience and a series of reflexions, (so defective is our present plan of education, and so little do young people in their nonage pay attention to become possessed of profitable knowledge) shall in you, dear little ones, appear the work of nature, and the fruit of constitution first of all bestowed upon you as your birth-right.

To conclude : be you among the rougher or the gentler sex, that you may be the more encouraged to pursue the work of learning in your youth, than which there can be nothing in the world that will more likely lead you on to virtue, be assured, that every thing, except this learning, and of course this virtue, is continually changing and decaying. The apostle says, *the fashion of this world is passing everlastingly away*. The beauty of the object first goes off, and afterwards the object disappears. The world itself, if we could see what, for example, sixty years ago it was, would now appear ridiculous ; and nothing, as we said before, is permanent

permanent or fixed, but learning, and the consequence of learning, namely, virtue.

We conclude our exhortation, and pray for you to your God and ours, your father and ours also. May he shed the choicest of his blessings on your head, convincing you of his especial grace and mercy, that the present year, that is the present time, he puts into your hands, declaring it your property, but *that* on the express condition, little though you are, of using it in such a manner, as to lay the ground-work of your happiness in this world and the other; while to-morrow, or all future time, is his peculiar property, and consequently a precarious treasure; out of which he makes such distribution as he pleases. Grant that none among you may hereafter be that barren fig tree in the gospel, which Christ Jesus bids the husband-man cut down, that it may occupy the ground unworthily no longer. We implore the Almighty for you, little ones, that if in future any of you should become so great a burthen to society, or such incumbrance to the world you live in, you may have some advocate, who, being interested like ourselves in your well-being, may at least obtain you some short respite for amendment, and adopt the husband-man's solicitude, by
prayer,

prayer, to get you one more year. May God to every one of us make this a happy year, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom; &c.

T H E H Y M N.

PATERNAL lord of ages hear
From thy celestial throne;
For sure thou wilt not scorn a child
That thus his wants makes known.

In safety led, from day to day,
By thy almighty hand,
At length we see another year
Now opening on the land.

If of the year so lately past,
Or those that went before,
We have, alas! too much mispent,
Let us mispend no more;

Convinc'd, that from thy bounteous hand,
No blessing can ensue
Greater than time, which they who waste,
Their crime shall dearly rue.

So.

So, while the circling years come back,
And other years begin ;
When friends that compliment renew,
Politeness first brought in,

No painful thoughts their wish may raise,
Such as the conscious mind,
Reflecting on days, weeks, months, years,
All misemploy'd, must find ;

But such as of past time well spent,
May the sweet mem'ry 'wake ;
While of the happiness they wish,
Already we partake.

SERMON

SERMON IV. ON EVIL SPEAKING.

PSALM I. v. 20.

*Thou fittest and speakest against thy brother: thou
slandereft thine own mother's son.*

COULD God, dear children, have expressed himself more fully on the subject of that evil speaking we are now to combat? He that makes a practice of it, does not spare his very brother: nay, if there be any species of relationship among us, dearer than a brother, such is the enormity, or horror of the sin, that, as St. Paul expresses it, so easily besets us, evil speakers have no reverence for that. Accordingly, that none who sit and speak against their brother, may excuse the blackness of their guilt, by saying, "he, we censure, is but our half brother, and of course no way related to us," God, by David's lips, in his paternal care to stop the progress of this vice, and take away all manner of apology from those who perpetrate it, adds; *thou slandereft thine own mother's son.* As much as if the verse had run as follows:

"Thou

“ Thou that givest up thy lips to evil speaking,
 “ fittest down to conversation, and destroyest the
 “ reputation of thy brother, even of him whose
 “ mother was *thy* mother. Were he only thy
 “ half brother, possibly thou mightest allege some
 “ shadow of a reason or excuse for such malignity;
 “ but you are both descended from one parent;
 “ and not only that, but likewise from one
 “ mother, whose affection, as still greater than a
 “ father’s, should have previously refined thy brotherly
 “ affection.” This is the Almighty’s sense of evil speaking,
 and he calls it a forgetfulness of God: the punishment for which is to be this:
that he will tear those guilty of it into pieces, while to such as order, as they should, their lips in speaking
charitably of their fellow creatures, will he show salvation.

From this recompense of those who keep themselves at all times free of evil speaking, with the punishment of those who practise it, and do not hesitate to censure or asperse their very brother, you may see the grievous guilt of what we preach upon at present. Is there more, dear children, requisite to set your hearts against it, so that when grown older you will not become infected with a vice that now, we may assert, has no dominion in you? Nothing further

ther we conceive is needful to preserve you from so black a crime; and therefore were we preaching to a congregation that would die to-morrow in that state of innocence which is peculiar to the state of childhood, we should have no more to say upon the subject; but alas! since, when you come abroad into the world, if Providence is pleased so long to spare you, bad examples will shoot up in every quarter, the precautions intimated in this exhortation may, by God's good blessing, prove extremely beneficial to you. Yet we do not mean to caution you so much against the vice of evil speaking, as to recommend instructions, such as will enable you to practise two great virtues, while you shun the vice we speak of. This, dear children, is an excellency appertaining to God's laws; that while they check one sin, they recommend to our attention many virtues. Let us see then, while we do our utmost to defend or warn your inexperienced minds against the sin of evil speaking, what are those two virtues just now mentioned, that will recommend themselves to your attention.

On the vice in question, we have therefore this short admonition for you; that at no time you speak ill of any person living. If you should
not

not have it in your power to speak upon the favourable side, respecting any one whose character is questioned, be in that case silent. Much more then, are you to hold your peace, when there is no necessity for speaking. And indeed it seems so vile a conduct in the person who looks out for opportunities of bringing people up in his discourse, without occasion, merely for the purpose of defaming them, that we should think no child of those addressed in any of these sermons, would be guilty of it.

Therefore is the rule, as we have mentioned, this: to be at all times silent. And can any rule be simpler, or more easily complied with? But, dear children, possibly you may enquire if you are to keep silence, tho' the very person, in whose favour we enjoin you to keep silence, has before misrepresented you? "What!" you may say, "when he has falsely spoken to my prejudice or injury, must I refrain from speaking truth of him, because that truth will hurt him?" Yes, dear little ones, you must;—for notwithstanding vengeance may in some degree be justified by nature, yet the gospel utterly condemns it; but provided you consider this a hardship, we must mention that though all
men

men should misrepresent you, still that circumstance by no means ought to mortify you. Mortify you, did we say? it ought to make you happy; for Christ Jesus tells you so. For he *whom all speak ill of, as he says, has reason to rejoice, or be exceeding glad because his name is written in the book of life.* And this is just as if the principal above you, in this place of education, were to give you such instructions as the following:--“ My dear child, I know the greater
“ part of your companions here take pleasure in
“ continually speaking to your prejudice: they
“ cannot but be very wicked; do not you, on that
“ account, however, speak amiss of them, tho’
“ what you should assert would be but truth: for
“ such a conduct would occasion great disorder,
“ quarrels, and confusion in my school, which is
“ already, as you know, sufficiently distracted;
“ but to make you some amends for being ever-
“ lastingly exposed to their harsh censure, I sin-
“ cerely promise, that provided you regard my
“ friendship, I will think the better of you in
“ proportion as I find they seek occasions to speak
“ evil of you.” Would not this, pray, be encouragement sufficient to comply with the advice thus given you? The encouragement of God then is the same; and you must necessarily con-
sider

sider it sufficient to perform your duty, on the article of evil speaking, which his law forbids you.

But his law forbids all evil speaking of your neighbour, by the advice it gives you to keep silence, when you cannot praise him. Yet we stop not here, since we would gladly lead you to a higher virtue, by enjoining such a conduct as the following: namely, that whenever you may hear another censured for his faults, you would in that case, ask yourself if what are mentioned as his faults, do in reality deserve that appellation; and provided you should join with those about you to condemn them, if it would not be considered a mean jealousy, and nothing better in you? It imports but very little, from what motives evil speaking be repressed. Some motives may indeed be nobler in their kind; but granting this do but repress the crime in question, it is such as you should never be above resorting to. When, as we make no doubt you may have read, the pharisee thanked God because he was not like the publican, who, at the very moment he said so, was praying near him, think you his self praise could be acceptable to God? If so, how came it that the publican departed from the temple justified, much rather than the other?

for the Saviour tells us in the clearest manner, he did so. And why was this? Because, as in another place we read, God hates, or, as he says, resists proud hearted people, while he gives the humble grace. And, little friends, in this part of our exhortation, let us ask you whether you have not at all times, even tender though your age is, something in you that with no great impropriety may be entitled jealousy, when you look round and see in your companions what you fancy enviable, and what too, considering afterward yourself, you fancy you are not possessed of? Let us speak ingenuously to you:—is there not a secret envy lurking in your composition? Do not those superior charms or riches you discover in your friend's possession, render you uneasy? Have you no one wish within you, that the admirers of that friend were yours; and do you not, on some occasions, carry your imagination to so great a length, that you are inwardly persuaded nature has neglected, for example's sake, your person, and embellished others round about you, and that fortune has promoted many in their situation, but left you to pine in poverty? If either of these notions, or the like, unfortunately should have place within you, it will show itself in action, and

you

you will not to the full accomplish the advice we just now gave you; namely, that whenever you might hear another censured for his faults, you should consider whether they deserved that appellation; and provided you should join with those about you to expose them, if it would not be put down for jealousy. To banish from within your hearts this jealousy, we have no antidote or medicine to recommend, so certain as humility. So certain, did we say? It is a never failing remedy. Dear children, cherish therefore this humility within your heart, and never will you then incur the vice of evil speaking; for humility proceeds not with such haste to take offence at what too many look upon as faults, in those whose company they mix with. He that thinks no otherwise than little of himself, is not so very likely to find fault with others; and that youth who is in any manner conscious how defective human nature must be in himself, is not astonished that the rest of men should have their imperfections, since he knows the time *may* come when he himself will be possessed of greater. If he sees improper conduct going forward, he will recollect the advice, already, as is not impossible, bestowed upon him; or if not, he will approve the advice

his preacher now bestows upon him, and cry out; alas! I may be guilty of much more improper conduct on my part, before the day is over. This is the proceeding of humility; but pride inspires us with a notion of ourselves; and when it once infects the human bosom, we conceive we are much more distinguished, excellent, and elevated than our fellow creatures are; we entertain ideas of our own rare talents, we debase the talents of all those we have to do with, and much more then, censure their defects.

Then likewise, as from pride *they* act who censure the defects of others, frequently it happens that they overshoot their mark, and censure when they should on the other hand commend, incurring by such conduct, in addition to their want of charity, a real crime. So far'd it with that pharisee, in whose abode Christ Jesus was so hospitably entertained, when, as you know, a certain woman, who had lately been of vicious life and conversation, entered where the guests were met together, and began to wash the Saviour's feet, and kiss them. Certainly, remarked the pharisee, communing with himself, if this man here were in reality a prophet, he would know how criminal

minal she is, who takes such freedoms with him: but blind pharisee, tho' you were well acquainted with her former vicious life, have you been since informed of her abundant tears, her sorrow, and repentance for it? This you might have known; but you much rather chose to cherish in your heart a censuring disposition, than be charitably minded on the subject of another's sin. It is then you that are the criminal: Christ Jesus knows the woman has been such; but in consideration of her love, those sins she has committed are intirely done away from God's remembrance. Had this pharisee but known the virtue of humility, he would not have incurred the sin of evil speaking, and least so, when he supposed himself commenting on the guile, the hypocrisy, or false appearance of another.

This, then, is that higher virtue, that humility we recommend, instead of barely keeping silence when your neighbour's character is not brought up in conversation where you are, and also when it is brought up: but yet this virtue, great as it may be, is not the only one. We recommend a greater virtue still; which is as follows: that not only you keep silence, but **provided** those who may be censured have in

truth been guilty, that you set them an example of the opposite demeanour. And this opposite demeanour has Christ Jesus set us. Yes, Christ Jesus, who, although he came among us as the prince of peace, the saviour of mankind, and the eternal son of God, and though he was much more maligned, or spoken evil of, than any other person possibly can be, delivered it by way of law, that we should bless all those who in their wickedness cursed us. This opposite demeanour, once again we tell you, has Christ Jesus set us in his conduct towards the woman taken in adultery; and whom the Jews insidiously brought before him, that if possible, by his proceeding in the case, he might ensnare himself: but Jesus disappointed them; for when convicted by their conscience on his saying, "Let the man among you without sin take up, as he expressed it, the first stone, and throw it at her," they had all gone out, and left the woman with him, he enquired what was become of her accusers, and if no one had condemned her? *No my lord,* replied the woman, *none.* *Then do not I condemn thee,* answered Jesus; *go and sin no more.* This is the example of demeanour I designed to glance at,

opposite

opposite to what the woman had committed. She was guilty; but the Saviour's virtuous life was an example for the woman, whom he counsell'd thus to go, and sin no more.

When therefore your companions act amiss, set them a pattern of behaviour opposite thereto: and surely you are able to exhibit an example, when beforehand you are capable of censuring the improper conduct you discern in your companions.

Thus you see, dear little friends, that far from yielding to the vice of evil speaking, you should practise an essential virtue, hold forth an example to mankind instead of troubling the repose and welfare of society, by undiscerning comments on their conduct. God vouchsafe that what has been at present mentioned may redound to your advantage. May you carefully refrain from every kind of evil speaking, lest the person you condemn should on the other hand be really a Joseph, whose behaviour we have spoken of already. Joseph's innocence was known to God, and that consideration was his comfort: tho' the master he was sold to, would not see it, but subscribed implicitly to the unworthy accusations of his shameful

wife; and this subjected Joseph to a long imprisonment. By such pernicious consequence think, dear disciples, your rash judgment may be followed: think the party you would censure may be blameless; but if not, take the more certain method of reproof, and in yourselves afford him an example of the virtue he has not respected. Be it so, thro' Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

THOU whose good providence first join'd

In bands of kindred all mankind,

Give me the grace to know,

That when I censure with my tongue,

I censure my own mother's son,

For thou hast told me so.

This knowledge if thy goodness deign,

Then from a crime shall I refrain,

So hurtful to mankind:

When, prone myself to many a fault,

Of others with harsh judging thought,

I do not speak my mind.

But

But if those others, not like me
Taught to conceal the faults they see,
My fault or folly blaze;
Thy gospel shall my bosom cheer,
Since those that all speak ill of here,
Shall surely have thy praise.

S E R M O N V.

O N P R I D E.

PROVERBS XI. V. 2.

*When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with
the lowly is wisdom.*

HOWEVER perfect all the virtues in themselves may be, it is the virtue opposite to pride alone that can be looked on as their basis; which, we trust, you will discern, dear children, in the sermon following this, when we propound our thoughts upon humility, and not at present; since in this we mean to give you some well meant, though feeble admonitions on the vice of pride; which, being absolutely the reverse in its effects or consequences to humility, is, in itself, the grand obstruction to man's happiness, the cause of his misfortunes, and the source of all his crimes; on which account, Christ Jesus seems to have directed the whole sum of his instruction to demonstrate the necessity of imitating that demeanour in
him

him which humility suggested; infomuch, that by that shining virtue he redeemed the world, while pride would otherwise have been the ruin of it.

For before its first foundations were established, what can you imagine was the vice that utterly undid the prince of darkness, the arch-angel, who is now God's enemy, and the insidious tempter of mankind? Through pride, from what vast elevation fell not Lucifer? That Lucifer who said, as in Isaiah's prophecy, the fourteenth chapter, *I will mount up into heaven, and exalt my throne above the stars of God, and be upon a level with the highest.*

But not only did the prince of darkness fall a victim to this pride, but, wrought on by his cunning to offend as he did, and provoke that God who meant not any of his creatures should be proud, did our first parents fall from their superlatively happy state into a gulph of sin, and consequently into all the misery entailed on human nature. They were happy in their situation of dependance upon God, till the deceitful serpent artfully possessed them with a notion of at least resembling him in power, in wisdom, and in glory. *You shall be as Gods,* said he, if you have only such a spirit as will

spur you forward to dispute the orders of your tyrant. Our first parents were persuaded by such flattering counsel; and what followed? You, no doubt, that often read the bible, know without my information. If you do not know, peruse the second chapter of the book of Genesis. They eat, in violation of God's positive commandment, that forbidden fruit which grew upon the tree of life; but which, upon the other hand, proved death to them.

What sins were not the effect of this first sin committed by our parents, in their pride and expectation of resembling God? With this, their pride, came, what the son of David in our text entitles, shame, infecting every human bosom; and those sins increased among us, till the son of God appeared to save us: but in what a form did he appear? In that, as we are told by the apostle, of a servant. He was lowly, and his lowliness was wisdom. He was really made flesh; that is to say, he was made man; or rather, he appeared among us a forlorn and helpless infant. This you will acknowledge, was not to affect the pride of Lucifer, or our first parents. Lucifer, though of the highest order, was not God, yet would have set himself upon a level with the highest; and

and our parents, who were merely mortal, listened to his guileful promise, when he told them they should be as Gods: but Jesus Christ, who thought it no invasion of God's privileges to affect his nature, was made man, and came among us in the likeness of a suffering infant. In his cradle we persuade ourselves we see him lifting up his eyes to God, and saying, in the words of David, in his fortieth psalm, and which St. Paul quotes after David in the tenth of Hebrews; *Sacrifice and offering thou would'st not, oh God; but hast bestowed a body on me. Therefore do I come, as in the volume of thy book, that is to say, the bible, it is written of me to perform thy will. I am content to do so. I delight to execute thy will, which is within my heart.* Now this, dear children, is by no means such a style as Pride makes use of. Pride delights not to perform another's will and pleasure, but has constantly a will and pleasure of its own. Hence, we persuade ourself, you will be inwardly convinced that pride, by which the angels fell, and afterwards by their insidious prince's cunning, the whole race of man in Adam, and to shew us the enormity of which the son of God appeared among us in a lowliness quite opposite thereto,—hence we persuade ourself,

ourself, we say, you will be inwardly convinced that pride was never meant for man.

And yet, we must confess, but with no view of being your apologist if you are proud, that such a knowledge is the sum and substance of religion; and that many, older than yourselves, have failed therein. We do not drop this intimation, notwithstanding, as we said just now, to countenance you in the vice of pride, if you should be unhappily infected with it; but because what we design to say, and from a very great authority indeed, appears so highly honourable to you; for though Jesus Christ had chosen to himself a number of disciples, who were always to be near his person, and might therefore see that even their blessed master condescended, upon all occasions, to appear and act as if he were their servant, added to that model he afforded them at first, by his inferior situation when he came into the world, these very men, thus chosen to be near his person, had, on more than one occasion, as we read, contentions or disputes among themselves to settle which should be the greatest. We extract the whole respecting one of these contentions from the ninth of Mark, as you may find it at your leisure. *Jesus being at Capernaum, in the house,*

house, he asked them (his disciples) what it was they had disputed on, as they were going thither? But ashamed, (as it appears they were) they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed which should be the greatest. Wherefore sitting down, he called them, saying, if among you any one desire to be before the rest, the same shall be the last of all, and (as I am, he might have added, for his conduct would have authorised the advice) their servant. And he took a child, and set him in the midst; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me. Thus far St. St. Matthew, in his eighteenth chapter, speaks in terms much stronger on this subject. What he says, it may not be amiss to give you likewise. Verily, he tells us, were the words of Jesus Christ, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Now this last quotation from St. Matthew, joined to what St. Mark concludes with, are the words that, as we said just now, appear so highly honourable to you; since Christ Jesus thought that the simplicity and modesty inseparable

ble from your time of life, was very proper to rebuke the pride of his disciples. Could he possibly have met their pride, made manifest in such contention for the highest place among themselves, as they were then aspiring to determine, with a more condemning sentence? Just as much as if he had informed them to the following purport: You are anxious for precedence; but I tell you, that the true precedence you desire to be possessed of, lies in the rejection of it. To ascend, you should descend; and when you can so far get rid of the unworthy spirit of that pride I see within you, as to imitate a little child's docility of understanding, gentleness of heart, and meekness of demeanour, then will God consider you great characters; and he, among you, that shall happily draw nearest such a model, shall be reckoned greatest of you.

At this prospect of your worthiness, dear little friends, rejoice: your names are written in the everlasting book of life before you have, or can have, made one single effort to deserve the grace of such a blest enrolment. But beware, however, lest this flattering prospect, which the preacher's love displays before you, should incline your little bosoms to be proud; in which case you
would

would run into the vice for which so many, more advanced in years and understanding, are condemnable in the Almighty's balance; and from which, as you are free, he holds you precious in his estimation: for remark, you are exempt from pride indeed, but not through any merit of your own. It is your nature to be so; and Jesus Christ, who held you up to his disciples as a model, which if they but imitated, they would really be great, produced you only in the person of a little child, who had not yet lived long enough to be infected with the vice of which we speak. What, therefore, follows hence, except that if at such a tender age you should unhappily controul the course of nature in your little hearts, so far as to contract the vice of pride, you would be then what truth would call you, though the expression, we confess, is somewhat harsh, so many little monsters, while the affection of all those that see you now exempt from pride, consider you so many little angels. Keep then this fair title, and abide within the decencies of nature, till such time as from the operation of God's grace within your heart, and the perfection of your reason, you shall make a merit of it, that this pride has no dominion in you: for at present, though

though the Almighty's bounty, should you die, would call you to the recompences of humility, it would be only of his bounty. You could give no reason at his seat of judgment, wherefore you were humble; all you would be able to advance would be, that he had made you so, and that you had been sundered from the world so early, that you could not lose the virtue.

It is true then, dear disciples, that the further you advance in life, the nearer you approach that time when you may forfeit the humility of childhood, and incur the pride of manhood. Be it then your study to adopt just notions of its ugliness. And in the first place, certainly, your knowledge is not so confined, but that you know already no one ever yet avowed his pride, whatever were the article on which he might be possibly allured to boast himself. Would any one of you, even little as you are, and unexperienced, being of the rougher sex, lay out to your companions, though the boast perhaps might be asserted, how much wealthier you were than they? Or, being of the gentler sex, how much more beautiful? This, common decency would not allow of; be persuaded then, there is in pride a something we are naturally shocked with.

In

In the next place, think, for instance, of the sovereign in his royal splendour ; see him on his throne, and there surrounded by the senate : (some among you may have, very possibly, been present at so grand a sight). This, though we mean not to condemn it, is an exhibition where spectators may behold the pride of greatness ; and accordingly we ask you, what are the effects resulting from it ? Such as are but short in their duration ; we may gaze at the rich clothes, and probably the gold that ornaments them may be bright enough to dazzle us : but think, dear children, of the sovereign in his usual garments. See him in his house, and there surrounded by a number of the poor, whose feet he washes. (Some among you may have, very possibly, been present at a ceremony so affecting). This is, on the other hand, a sight in which spectators may behold the goodness or utility of greatness ; when the traveller, weary and fatigued with walking, may, in royalty itself, command a friend so ready to refresh him. And accordingly we ask you, what are the effects resulting from it ? Such as may be long reflected on with heart-felt satisfaction. Such a deed, suggested by humility, will not, as in the former instance, dazzle

zle us; but do much more, force tears of sympathy, or fellow-feeling from us: and such always is the triumph of humility, while pride may make us wonder, but can go no farther. And which, pray, we ask you, makes the more agreeable impression, admiration or compassion?

But the admiration flowing from the sovereign's presence in his kingly habit, is occasioned by that pride of greatness which a monarch may exhibit; while the pride that I would reprobate is looked at with contempt; for pride is such a sottish passion, that it courts applause from those itself despises; consequently are its hopes at all times disappointed, and with reason; for what tribute of applause are we encouraged to bestow on him who will display before us his advantages in point of riches, for example sake, when we are sensible that, should we need a meal, he will not, from the impulse of a charitable disposition, spread his table to relieve our fainting nature? No. The least unfavourable notion we can form within us of a man addicted to the sin of pride, is this: that he must always want respect; or, as the text expresses it, *shame wait upon his pride*. We could go on, dear little friends, and furnish you

you with other strong dissuatives against pride; but that we mean, in our discourse, upon humility, to start such arguments as, while they show that *with the lowly there is wisdom*, or evince for your instruction the propriety or virtue of an humble bosom, will point out the impropriety, or sin, of being proud. To that discourse, then, we refer you; it will be a suitable continuation of this subject, and at present, in the spirit of the son of Sirach's words, as you may find them in the three and twentieth of Ecclesiasticus, pray for you; or, on second thoughts, put down the words that you may utter them yourselves. *Oh God, and father of my life, let me have no proud look, but turn a haughty mind from me that am thy servant. Then shalt thou hold up the child that fain would serve thee.* What, you may go on, do I possess that did not come from thy all bounteous hand? Oh banish from my heart those notions I should otherwise give way to, of my own exclusive merit, that I may not think more highly of myself than other children; and instruct me, of thy grace, that far from being proud, I should consider nothing but that daily bread I am permitted to solicit, as thy gift; all other species of good things, as they are called

called among us, being presents from the hand of fortune, whose capricious conduct I should rather stand in fear of, than applaud myself because I have been benefited by her smile. Let me place all my trust in thee; and then, instead of being haughty to my fellow beings, that have tasted thy benevolence much less than I have, it will be my daily satisfaction to do every one among them all the good I can. In this let me evince my pride. I may, with safety, glory in it here, and thou wilt bless me for it in eternity. So be it for the sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

FOR thy unnumber'd benefits,
 Lord, let me bless thy name;
 And when I pray each night and morn,
 Thy bounteous love proclaim;
 That does to me such favour show,
 More than a thousand round me know.

What

What then am I? No merit, sure,
In me deserves such love;
That with a liberal hand thou should'st
Thus bless me from above.
Of thy free grace it comes alone,
That such great mercy I am shown.

Take from me then, O Lord, all pride,
And grant, that since I know
So many want the gifts I have,
I may with joy bestow
Of my large stock, at least some part,
To mitigate their grief of heart.

SERMON VI. ON HUMILITY.

MATTHEW XVIII. V. 4.

*Whoever shall humble himself as this little child,
the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

WE have shewn how little, pride becomes you, not alone, as men or women, but as what you are, or should be, namely, unpresuming children. In reality, that child must have been badly off, who has contracted notions of a passion which seems built on the possessor's knowledge of his mighty worthiness; a knowledge which, in general, children are not old enough to have. With safety, therefore, may we say, that taking human nature in the general prospect, a proud child is a phenomenon or wonder.

We shall now proceed to shew how much humility becomes you. In reality, that child must have been badly off, who is without a disposition that seems but pure nature

nature. So that here too, no less safely than before, may we assert, dear little hearers, that a child is but another appellation for humility; or that a child is the expression of that virtue, in a human form and shape. Christ Jesus thought it so inseparable from the person of a child, that when, as in the chapter out of which our text is taken, we are told it happened that his followers or disciples wished to know which of them was the greatest, he sat one before them, saying, *he that shall be humble as this little child is.*

Since humility is so inherent to the state of childhood, it should therefore seem, that in our exhortations to humility directed to you, we do nothing else than what a sculptor does, who, from a block of marble, would produce the figure of a man. The man is in the stone; the artist only takes away the outward crust. So too, when we exhort you to be humble, and assign our reasons why you should be so, we do but turn your thoughts upon some bad impressions you may very likely have received; and which, perhaps, prevent you from evincing your humility. In short, we do not change your nature: we unmask your nature

only, and produce it in the fairest point of view.

Enjoy so great a glory, therefore, little ones, whom Jesus Christ thus puts upon a level with those cherubims, that, we are taught, have their abode in heaven already, and behold the son of God in your behalf, while he declares, that such as may on earth offend you, shall have cause to wish a mill-stone had been put about their necks, to sink them in the sea. Enjoy, we say, so great a glory, and pour out your little hearts, in gratitude to God, for having thought you so inestimably precious, in the scale of his creation, that provided, in the season of your innocence, (an innocence however, which is built upon your incapacity of doing wrong, and therefore is not meritorious,) you should sink beneath the weight of sickness, and your parents lose the treasure they confess they live on, you would be immediately conveyed from their affectionate embrace, into the bosom of your god. Oh the foreseeing love of your creator! had he promised his eternal mansions to those only who should serve him zealously on earth; had he informed us in his word, none should hereafter see his face that had not laboured to deserve the blessing, in
what

what state would you have been, poor children, then? God's rigour, we acknowledge, would not have assigned you over to eternal punishment with devils, who torment the wicked; but his justice might have left your souls to sleep in the embrace of everlasting death, with those who, in their life time, had no power of being good or wicked.

But from this digression, we return to the immediate business of our text, which is to show you, that whoever is as humble as you are, is great in the Almighty's estimation, or to fortify you in such motives as may recommend humility; and we assert, there are two reasons why even you, dear little friends, are frequently less humble than you should be. It is true indeed, that learning makes some people mad, as Festus says was the apostle's situation; but we do not glance at that, as making you less humble than consists with human nature. Would to God, there were some reason to accuse you of possessing your ideas with the great superiority in which a stock of learning would inevitably place you! There would then be no occasion to complain that you mispend the precious season of your childhood, which can never be so well employed, as in acquiring know-

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ledge :

ledge: but the reasons we would glance at, that prevent you from adopting that humility which so particularly suits the age of childhood, are, in one sex, the idea of that fortune they will come to be possessed of at a future time of life; and in the other, the delusion of that beauty, which already some undoubtedly are to be found, who will not hesitate to tell us they discover in themselves.

Yes, dear disciples, you that are by nature, as we say, cut out to figure in a public kind of life, already you begin to plume yourselves upon the kindness you are treated with by fortune, and imagine you are better than the rest about you, merely on account of those possessions you are born to. Ah, good little friends! you are not of so tender a capacity, but that your minds may comprehend what we are going now to mention. Safely then, we say, make boast of your prosperity; nor fear, such boast will fix a blot upon your reputation for humility, tho' you should say with David, *I shall never be removed*; provided, in the interval, you add with David likewise, *thou oh Lord hast made my hill so strong*. With this addition to your boast, what vaunt will not religion and God's grace permit you to indulge in? What superiority
of

of situation not affect, if you ascribe it to the Almighty's goodness? He that owns himself indebted to the bounty of an overflowing providence for every thing he is possessed of, will appear the humbler for his boast; since pride is for no other cause forbid us, than by reason of the injury it does God's rights and privileges: but to strike you dumb, if you would boast for any other cause of what you have, know this: that if you are distinguished from the rest by riches, others are distinguished from the rest by merit; that the great abundance of those riches cannot make amends for what we call your narrow understanding; for a narrow understanding surely you must have, if you exult in what has often lifted up the unworthiest of our species to a greater height than you can possibly pretend to: and in short, that if you would impress the little crowd about you with a veneration for your riches, you must show the good you mean to do them, with those riches. This, if you perform, you may in that case safely gratify your ruling passion, pride; for then, you will be great as well as wealthy.

And you likewise, that a certain author tells us were designed by nature only for a private station; you that have the character of softness

to adorn you, while our sex, as he continues, have so many manly virtues, you begin to have ideas, tender though your years are, of that beauty which a series of short years will ripen in you. And indeed, how can you but indulge such notions, seeing all our sex are so disposed to flatter female weakness, while your own are ever on the watch to judge you harshly, after you have listened to that flattery? Would you be exempted from the accusations of the last? Be early on your guard against the flattery of the first, or weigh what they advance in the exactest balance. Then, dear children, will it act by way of antidote against itself, when you reflect that they have nothing to compare your charms with, but the beauty of a flower, that blooms, for instance, in the morning, and decays before the hour of sun-set: and besides, when you consider that they do not tell you such fine things that you *may* listen and believe them, but because they know, beforehand, you *will* listen and believe them.

Know, beforehand, you will listen and believe them! If indeed there were no consequence annexed to your belief of their assertions, you might safely be permitted to indulge it. But when once you listen with complacency,

gency, and can persuade yourself, upon their credit, that your eyes will not permit the stars to shine, should you be up at midnight; that fresh flowers spring up beneath your footsteps; that your smiles can dissipate affliction; and that want will not approach the happy mortal who may sit beside you,—who will but acknowledge you are badly off in point of understanding? When you pride yourself upon the common compliments paid now a-days to beauty, granting even they were true, what would you say, on being shown a picture done by some great artist, that should boast its lively colours, and exact resemblance? Were this possible, would it not make you smile, reflecting that the picture was no more than what the painter's skill had made it? This requires no explanation; so that, little friends, even were you mistresses of every charm which flatterers will in time purloin from heaven, if we may say so, and attribute to you, it would be ridiculous to plume yourselves upon their praises. What then would it be, if proving only common mortals, you should feed your vanity with their applauses.

Ah, fair little friends! upon this subject we would take more pains with you, than with the

ruder sex; because the pride of fortune is not so exposed to peril as the pride of beauty. Gold and silver may indeed be of some use; for even Jesus Christ advises us, if we are prudent, to make friends at least of what he calls the mammon of unrighteousness; that when we fail, it may become the means of getting us an everlasting habitation. Now, let any one produce us, from God's word, a single passage where so much is said in praise of beauty. Did we say *so much*? Alas! dear children, when you come into the world, you will be very quickly taught how prejudicial beauty may become to its possessor. Does there pass a single day whereon some women do not fall sad victims to it, ruined both in soul and body? This you do not know at present; but you know as well as we can tell you, the uncertainty of beauty. You have, many of you, doubtless, some acquaintance now well stricken, as the scripture says, in years: seek then, in such a one, the beauty of her childhood. You will not, without much difficulty, bring yourself to think she ever could be charming. This is the inevitable consequence of age. And would you build your happiness upon so frail, so transient an enjoyment? If you *must* have wherewithal to boast,

boast, boast rather of some ornament not subject to decay; for never can *that* give you real happiness, whose loss you have continual cause to fear. Endeavour at God's grace; for that will last eternally. And what is more, God's grace inspires humility, than which, as we have said already, nothing more becomes the state of childhood. Yes, God's grace inspires humility, and the instructions of humility are admirably suited to dissuade us from all boasting, save of that which introduced it, of the grace of God. It was the grace of God that made the blessed Jesus Christ so humble, as to come into the world of needy parents, who had nothing better to receive him than a stable at his birth: it was the grace of God that cherished this humility within his heart, so far that he approved himself a dutious child, and was in all things subject to his parents, tho' himself their master; that he daily grew in wisdom and in favour, not alone with God, (that was not to be wondered at) but man; that tho' the sovereign of Tiberius Cæsar, he would pay him tribute as a subject; that he showed his patience, by not murmuring or complaining when insulted, scourged, and spit on by his enemies; that when reviled, as says St. Peter, he reviled not

again, nor threatened when he suffered; but resigned himself to God, who judgeth righteously; and that, in short, he laid his life down for a world of sinners. Is it possible, that grace inspired all this? No wonder then, humility contributes to man's greatness *in the kingdom*, as our text expresses it, *of heaven*. Now show us, if you can, young people, you that are perhaps arriving at that time of life when you begin to think with pleasure of the opening charms bestowed upon you, show us, if you can, we say, what nature can have done in any sort like this. Oh the strong opposition of God's grace and nature! Grace bestows a talent on you, and the more you wish to profit by it, just the more, in that proportion, shall you afterward receive: but avaricious nature, when some years are passed away, shall re-demand what she has lent you. Grace shall make you mistresses of gifts that will endure for ever: but the grave, or very likely, illness during life, shall take away that little beauty you possess, and which you may in future be so proud of.

To conclude and comprehend at once both sexes, be persuaded that humility is first of all the basis or foundation-virtue of religion, or God's fear; and secondly, the only virtue children

children have it in their power effectually to practise. Jesus Christ, not only in his state of manhood, when he suffered with such patience, or went up and down, as the apostle tells us, doing good, supplied us with a model, by pursuing which we should attain God's promises; but when a helpless infant, in his cradle likewise, he directed how we might attain to righteousness; because in every period of man's life, humility is virtue; and our state of infancy is sacred to humility. Dear children, may you never lose this jewel that so much adorns you in this world, and shall hereafter shine so brightly in that crown of righteousness, which, as we trust, your heavenly father will bestow upon you. May his grace accompany your steps, and may you never think more highly of yourself than other children round about you. May his blessed spirit, which is peace, beyond all comprehension, show you that humility enables those who have been injured to forgive, and fits them to approach the throne of mercy with that supplication in their lips, by Jesus Christ first taught, forgive us *our offences, Lord, as we do those who have offended us.* In all your little differences with each other, may you look upon it as your boast, not to oppose a counte-

nance or heart of pride to him or her with whom you have to do, but of humility; for where is to be found that child, so obdurate as to hold out against the meekness and complacency discoverable in another, so as not to yield at last? You will, in that case, by the strength of your humility, have won your little friend, and gained, as the apostle says, a soul in some degree to virtue.—This is what we had to tell you on the subject of humility. May God bestow his blessing on it, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.

THE HYMN.

THOU, who from heaven look'st down well
pleas'd,
The humble heart to see,
That blessing of a humble heart,
Continue, Lord, to me.

Then, as at present, I am dear,
And precious in thy sight,
All my life long I shall be so,
And heaven remain my right.

While

While pride, by which th' arch-angel host,
Long since from glory fell,
Shall such as imitate them, plunge
Into the depths of hell.

While this is the case, it is not possible for us to be true to the principles of justice and equity, which are the basis of all moral and political action.

SERMON VII.

ON FAMILY AFFECTION.

GENESIS xliii. v. 23.

Peace be to you, fear not.

THIS was Joseph's salutation to his brothers after they had sold him for a slave, and were, by something like a miracle, as one might call it, in his power. The story is contained at large in Genesis, and it affords us proof on one hand of unbrotherly demeanour, utterly opposed to that affection we have chosen for the theme of this discourse; and on the other hand, of gentleness and love, when justice and severity were dreaded.

We shall therefore bring into one point of view, the several particulars of this affecting tale; for in the bible they are mixed with other matters; and when this is done, we shall conclude with some reflections tending to enforce the duty now in question.

Joseph was the son of Jacob, who had twelve in all. He was the youngest of the

the twelve, except his brother Benjamin; which Benjamin, together with himself, were loved by Jacob more than either of the other ten: but Joseph was much dearer than even Benjamin, and used to wear a coat of many colours, which the father, in his fondness, had made for him.

It appears, dear little friends, that Joseph piqued himself too much upon this fondness of his father; since, on more than one occasion, as we read, he intimated to his brothers that he thought a time would come when they, together with his parents, would bow down before him. This, perhaps, might be unbrotherly in Joseph, but the notion was well founded: Joseph's boasting was one step in that extraordinary chain of wonders which, by God's appointment, were to happen, that the Jews might afterwards obtain a settlement in Egypt.

Joseph's brothers could not but remark this boasting, which to do was natural enough; but they conceived the diabolical design of putting him to death, while he was with them in the country where they fed their flocks; and to conceal their guilt, they plotted to give out that some wild beast had eaten him.

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The little Benjamin was not at this time with them in the country, or the scheme against his brother would not, very likely, have been planned; for he and Joseph were both born to Jacob by a latter wife, and loved each other so affectionately, that, beyond all disputation, Benjamin would have revealed the treachery to his father; but as Benjamin was absent, they resolved upon the perpetration of their crime. However, Reuben, who, it seems, was not of such a cruel temper as his brothers, wished to save the unhappy Joseph; but to bring about his purpose, seemed, at first, to favour their design of doing him, at least, some mischief; and accordingly he counselled them to shed no blood, but cast him naked, and without support, into a pit hard by; from which, as we should think, he meant to take him privately and save his life.

The story intimates, that Reuben happening to be absent from his brothers after this, and as we must suppose on business; in the interval, a company of merchants accidentally passed by, when Judah, who, though very wicked, was not quite so cruel as the rest, reflecting they might rid themselves of Joseph, and not kill him, took the opportunity to ask his brothers

thers what advantage they should get by murder? *Let us rather sell him for a slave*, said he; *for, after all, he is our brother.* This they did; and Joseph was delivered to the merchants, and, as providence had ordered every thing to bring about that great event it had in meditation, carried down to Egypt.

After this transaction, Reuben being still away, they took their wretched brother's coat, and smeared it here and there with blood, that Reuben and their father might suppose some beast had torn him. Reuben, when returned, was told of Joseph's fate; he mourned his miserable fortune, and perhaps suspected something, but omitted, notwithstanding, to inform his father, which, no doubt, he thought would but have added to his sorrow, had he only whispered that his brothers possibly had killed the well beloved and favourite Joseph. Jacob's sorrow was, indeed, sufficient of itself, when he beheld the bloody coat. His family essayed to comfort him, but he refused their consolation. *Joseph*, my dear Joseph, said the poor old man, *is torn in pieces.* He is gone, and I shall never see his face again. I will not be consoled. Nothing but death shall end my lamentation for so well beloved a son.

But

But let us now attend on Joseph, who, by this time was arrived in Egypt, and re-sold by those that had first bought him, to an officer, called Potiphar, in Pharaoh's palace. Joseph was a youth of virtue, added to his character for brotherly affection, as hereafter we shall see; and therefore God made all things appertaining to his master, prosper, while he had the management of matters as an upper servant; but the wife of Potiphar, a very wicked woman, seeing Joseph was a beautiful young man, would have persuaded him to do a crime that in its consequences must have rendered Potiphar exceedingly unhappy. Joseph's virtue made him ask her, how she could imagine he would *do so great a wickedness and sin*, as he expressed it, *against God?* This virtue irritated the abandoned woman, and she told her lord, when he returned, (for she had seized the opportunity his absence held her out to tempt the youth) that Joseph had attempted to commit the very crime which she herself, though unsuccessfully, had wished him to commit. Whereon his master, in a rage and fury that would not allow him to examine matters, had the guiltless Joseph put into the common prison.

But

But the beneficial consequences of the young man's virtue followed, or went with him thither ; and no doubt, though in a gloomy dungeon, he beheld the daylight, we may say, of gladness, shining round him. Situated thus, it was not long before the keeper noticed his behaviour, and was minded to allow him some authority ; which, he accepting, bore himself with great fidelity, and just as in his master's house, so here too, every thing went well that Joseph had to manage.

There were fellow prisoners with him, two domestic servants of king Pharaoh, who were both in custody for some displeasure done their master ; and these servants, after they had been some little time deprived of liberty, dreamed each a dream, which Joseph, owing to the wisdom God inspired him with, interpreted ; and, as he told them, so it came to pass ; for one of them was reinstated in the office he had filled before-hand, and the other taken out of goal and hanged. Relying on the certainty of his interpretation, Joseph, when he gave it, earnestly besought the former to remember him when he should find himself restored to office, and say something in his favour when before king Pharaoh ; *for indeed, said he, they stole*
me

me in the land of Canaan ; neither have I done a crime in Egypt to be put into this dungeon. Notwithstanding which, the servant, as we find, forgot him in his subsequent prosperity.

But God's high will, together with the dispensation of his providence, was not to be made void, or counteracted ; and accordingly, king Pharaoh, two years after, had two dreams, which none about him could interpret. It was now the ungrateful servant recollected, as he said, the fault he had committed with respect to Joseph, and informed his master who he was, and what he had done for him in the prison. Joseph, upon this, was sent for to appear at court ; and, being told the dreams, made answer, saying: *do not dreams belong to God?* Who then but God can give the king an answer? He *will* do so ; and this answer likewise shall be one of peace. On this, he entered on an explanation of the dreams ; which signified, that Egypt would be blessed with seven succeeding years of plenty ; but that afterwards, a seven years' dearth, or famine, would prevail. The business, therefore, was to make the most of those seven plenteous years to come, by laying up the corn in granaries, that when the famine came, there might not be a want of bread :

bread : this business needed some discreet or prudent person to direct it ; and what person could be pitched upon so fit as Joseph ? Joseph, therefore, was promoted, and became a lord in Egypt. Thus we see an opening made for the completion of God's purpose, and the piety of Joseph recompensed.

The plenteous season passed away ; and, just as every thing had been predicted, the succeeding dearth began ; whose consequences, while the Egyptians underwent [no inconveniences, extended to the neighbouring regions, and were therefore felt in Canaan. Jacob, and his family, with every individual of the country, wanted bread. The previous plenteousness in Egypt was a circumstance, however, that could not be long concealed ; and therefore Jacob, when he knew where corn was to be had, dispatched his sons to Egypt, all but Benjamin, least mischief should befall him by the way ; for Benjamin, as we have said already, was the son of his old age, on which account he loved him greatly, and much more, since Joseph had been taken from him.

It was necessary, when they got to Egypt, they should come before their brother Joseph, seeing he was governor, and sold to all the people.

ple. They were introduced, but did not know him; though he instantly knew them. And now, imagine not, dear children, Joseph gave a loose to his resentments at the interview. Upon the other hand, so far was he from entertaining any malice in his bosom, or remembrance of their cruel conduct, that the meeting moved him greatly: though the story does not tell us so, yet his behaviour warrants us to say as much; for he contrived a scheme that would in future give them, every one, the greater satisfaction for the present trouble it occasioned them; and therefore he asserted harshly they were spies; and having brought them to acknowledge, what he knew already, that their father had another child, besides themselves, the little Benjamin, which they had left behind in Canaan, he availed himself of that intelligence, and made them a proposal, namely: to leave one by way of surety, and bring down their brother Benjamin; *or by the life of Pharaoh, as he told them, are ye spies.* These terms they could not but comply with, and set out. Arriving at their father's house, they told him the whole matter; Jacob's heart sunk in him at the news; for he considered Simeon, who was left behind, as lost, and charged them all
with

with an intention to deprive him of his children. *Joseph, he began, is dead; so too is Simeon; dead at least to me; and you would now take Benjamin away: but he shall not go with you; for should mischief happen to him, ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

In this determination he remained till, in the end, a second want of food compelled him to allow of Benjamin's departure; for without him would not any of his children quit the place: but having got their father's leave to take down Benjamin, and having likewise every one received their father's blessing, which he gave them with an aching bosom, they set out.

When they were come to Egypt, and stood once again before their brother, they declared themselves unhappy in a circumstance which needs not here be introduced; but he dispelled their trouble, bidding them, as in the text, *not fear*; and seeing Benjamin, his bowels yearned upon him, for the rest were but half brothers to him. He was fearful, notwithstanding, he should be discovered by his brothers, for as yet he had not heightened their distress sufficiently to give them afterwards that joy and satisfaction his affection had in view; and therefore he re-
tired

tired into his chamber, and there gave a loose to tears.

Judge what must their astonishment have been when they discovered Joseph meant to feast them in his house. The dinner was served up; they spent the day in mirth, and were dismissed with corn: but being on their journey, certain persons, sent by Joseph, overtook them, with a charge of having stole a silver cup at dinner. Now this cup, good little friends, had Joseph privately conveyed into the younger brother's sack; and there, on search, was it discovered. They returned again to Joseph, who accused them of ingratitude, but on their subsequent behaviour, and on Judah's telling him how much the loss of Benjamin would grieve their father, should he not go up, so much, he added, as to kill him, Joseph could refrain no longer, but cried out, *I am your brother! I am Joseph!*—

But we purposely forbear the rest, dear little hearers; you may read it at your leisure in the bible. You will find it move you; but the part we have already travelled over is sufficient to instruct you in that brotherly and sisterly affection we intended in this sermon to inculcate. You have seen, that notwithstanding

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ing what may very properly be called the bleeding cruelty which Joseph's brothers did not hesitate to treat him with, his gentle nature faithfully preserved an overflowing measure of affection in their favour, so as to forgive their outrages, and to bestow upon them all that good which his employment in the land of Egypt, where he ruled with great authority, enabled him to do. What rational excuse, then, will you have, dear children, if for little bickerings, which may arise among you, (for such wrongs as Joseph had occasion to complain of, cannot, in the ordinary course of things, subsist in any of your families,) you keep up an eternal war of animosity, and grieve the spirit of your parents, who must unavoidably lament when they behold you otherwise than linked in peace and friendship with each other? Let us ask you, whether to afflict them by such conduct, is to show yourselves their children? All their efforts are directed to procure you happiness, and in their efforts they are animated by the hope and expectation of succeeding. What then shall we call that conduct which would wilfully destroy such hope and expectation?

This, the duteous Joseph, we are authorised to tell you, never did: that probity which taught him to respect a master's claims, would, certainly, in case he had been tempted to despise a father's rights, have made him reverence the grey hairs of him to whom he was indebted for the benefit of life. And yet, poor youth, what did thy brotherly affection gain thee? Those of thy own kindred, and who called thy venerable father, their's too, were so cruel as to sell thee for a slave! And what did thy integrity procure thee? Nothing but a gaol. Be you, however, comforted, dear little friends, for certainly your brotherly or sisterly affection and integrity will not be liable to such harsh treatment. Yield then to the model held you out by Joseph: both your parents and yourselves will be the happier for it.

And you too, that very probably may be a favourite, may be more carested and loved than those composing with you the same family, may be the child of your fond parents' age, and therefore, or for other reasons, weighty as they think them, may be much more cherished than the rest that have proceeded from them, hear what sort of conduct we would recommend you to pursue. We do not bid you, flight that
greater

greater measure of affection which is lavished on you, but exhort the absolute reverse. Yes, favourite of your parents, let their partiality be precious in your sight, and do whatever you are able to become a greater favourite still; but think it, in the interim, your duty to convert this partiality of those that love you, to the benefit of those they ought to love as much. Do not, as Joseph did, on more than one occasion, and for which we cannot chuse but blame him, twit them with the great ascendancy you have above them, intimating, they shall come to *bow their sheaves before you*, but employ the credit you are happily possessed of, to increase *their* credit. And provided your fond parents make you up a coat of many colours, as an emblem of their love, freely display it in your brothers' or your sisters' view; but add, *be not afflicted at the sight, for, surely, I will so behave, that it shall fit us all.*

We finish: and do thou, oh God, bestow thy blessing on the words now spoken, so that they may benefit the hearers. Let the exhortation of thy servant Joseph to his brethren, when he sent them to bring down his reverend father, *see ye fall not out with one another by the way*, be likewise planted in the tender minds

of those we preach to. Give them, of thy grace, to know how sweet a thing it is for children of one family to live connected with each other in thy peace. So, nothing they may see shall be considered dearer to them than what others have such constant feuds with—their own flesh and blood. This exhortation of the patriarch, if thy grace enable them to treasure in their minds, then, while, by honouring their parents, they enjoy long life, the good things of the land shall be before them, and reward their family affection: such good things as Joseph lavished on his brothers, (after having fixed them every one in Goshen), in pursuance of his order, *not to let their stuff detain them from returning with his father, since the good things of the land should be before them.* In the spirit of so liberal a promise, let these little ones enjoy those blessings thou bestowest on those who live in unity with one another, for the sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

HOW sweet, O Lord, how excellent,
How glorious is the scene,
When those from the same parents sprung,
Scarce know what quarrels mean!

They love each other; and, still more,
Their parents love as well:
For where fraternal love is found,
There filial too must dwell.

This, the fond parents, day by day,
With heart-felt transport view;
And every hour, amid life's cares,
Teems with some pleasure new.

Grant, of thy grace, O Lord, that we
May each in his abode,
Fill with like joy the heart of those
From whom our life first flow'd.

With this poor gratitude, at least,
Let us their love repay;
Nor be the cares they undergo
For our sake, thrown away.

S E R M O N VIII.

O N H O L I D A Y S.

ECCLESIASTES xii. v. 12.

Much study is a weariness of the flesh.

UNDoubtedly it is so, dear disciples; and perhaps, while we are giving you this information from another, you will think there needed not a Solomon to come and let you know as much. It is a truth, you have yourselves experienced, you will tell us.—We rejoice you have, and hope that your experience has been gained by undergoing what the author of our text went through; and that in consequence thereof, you have acquired some portion of his knowledge.

You have laboured, you will say, since last vacation; and consider it high time you should enjoy some respite from the weariness of study, and see once again those parents who so truly love and cherish you. It is a natural and a commendable wish; and they, we doubt not, think,

think, as much as you do, it is now high time you should again be all together. In reality, they have not the recourse your innocent simplicity affects, to puerile expedients; so that they may cheat away that time which lies between them and the day when you return to their affectionate embrace. We will not mention what those puerile expedients are. We only say, that being children, you will act like children; and, desiring to abridge an interval that parts you from a great enjoyment, will betake yourselves to methods that even make that interval seem longer. Of such methods, therefore, their superior reason makes no use; and while they hope, as much as you do, that the time will quickly come when you shall see each other, do not undergo *that* hope which is of such a kind, that when deferred, *it makes*, as Solomon informs us, *the heart sick*.

These words are taken from the thirteenth chapter of his book of Proverbs; and what follow, seem not totally inapplicable to our present subject. The whole verse is: *hope deferred, maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life*. What then is their desire, dear little hearers, when their hope of seeing you returned from school, is gratified? Need

we inform you? Doubtless, their desire is this: to find you much improved in learning; and, as time adds daily strength to reason, and converts what we call fondness, by degrees, into affection, their desire, when you return, is to behold in that behaviour you put on, less child-like fondness, and more man or womanly affection. In your infancy, they look for nothing but this fondness at your hands. Poor children! what would prove your state, if more should be expected from you? It is then sufficient, you hold out your little hands that you may take those good things they are constantly bestowing on you. We may call you little twigs, which every day they water, for no other reason than because their hands first planted you. In your dependant situation, lies the charm that binds you to them; and your readiness to be for ever *taking*, recommends you to their kindness, since, on their part, nature teaches them a readiness to be for ever *giving*. It detracts not from their love, that you remember only the last giver, and would fly into the arms of him that had most heart to give. It would be laying such a tax upon your infancy as you could never pay them, were they to expect you should be grateful. Therefore
has

has your fondness all the charm of gratitude, without the merit of it: but, in time, as you begin to put away the child, then they expect you should begin to put away the things of children; and instead of always flinging your fond arms about their necks, when they have greatly pleased you, have recourse to reason; and debating with yourselves, say thus, or to the following purpose: “ I am always reaping
“ favours from my dear, dear father, and my
“ dear, dear mother; how shall I find out a way
“ to make them happy, by remembring all
“ their kindnesses.”

Of your duty to improve in learning, so that when your holidays commence, which will you know be very soon, your parents may enjoy in your society that *tree of life* just mentioned, we say nothing here, except that if you have not been attentive to that point already, you should set about a reformation; for as children will be always children, so too parents will be always parents; and from this remark, it flows of course, that a reform in that particular can never be begun too late. The other duty, namely, of adopting such a conduct when at home, as to rejoice the bosom of your parents, by affording proof that, as your understanding

travels towards maturity, you are converting child-like fondness into man or womanly affection, as we said just now ;—this other duty we shall make the subject of our present exhortation.

That a constant application to the work of study is not only wearisome, but that it would retard improvement, is a truth that needs no sort of disputation. You are therefore soon to be released from study ; and beforehand, you enjoy those pleasures which you know from sure experience your beloved and loving parents will procure you. We are sensible, however, that some children cherish such ideas of their holidays, as rather spring from indolence ; conceiving they shall be released from tiresome lessons, than from any other motives. Still, however, their imagination dwells upon the pleasure they shall have at home through the indulging medium of their parents ; and in which they know their parents will themselves be happy likewise to indulge them.

Now from this, their disposition, we adduce the motive that should operate upon you, children, to conduct yourself in such a manner as we recommend. Beloved Mary Ann, and you, no less beloved Henrietta, you are sensible

ble how much your tender parents, but particularly of the two, your tender mother, love you. Often, at the time your preacher has been with you, during your vacation, for you know she never lets you pass away your holidays in idleness, but undergoes a great expence that you may spend a portion of them in the business of improvement,—often, we repeat it, at the time your preacher has been with you, and communicating what she thought him capable to teach you, has she entered the apartment, anxious to discover you gave pertinent replies to every question asked you. Not her tongue alone, but in a language so peculiar to them, have her eyes evinced the motherly solicitude within her, to discern you making such a progress in the arts, as she conceived would ornament your person, and still more, make your society desirable, when you should be of age to mingle with society: but when, we say not through perverseness, but at least thro' inattention to instruction, it seemed lost upon you, we have noticed she would leave the room in tears, so great she thought her disappointment. Wonder not at this; for, as by nature you were framed to make all those that once beheld you fall in love with so much grace and

sweetness, so too you have every requisite to raise within the bosom of a parent such emotions as are far from common. Say then, what emotions would you wish to raise in such a mother's bosom? Those of exquisite delight, or exquisite anxiety? By children, of the common sort in point of understanding, had they such a mother, no long time would be required to answer such a question. Never, more than from commenting on the way in which she manifested her affection, have I learned that in particular a mother's bosom is God's work, and God's work only. So affectionate a parent!—If of those that teach you, any one in private censures your behaviour, she will shake her head and grieve. If he commends you, she will love him for the commendation, and rejoice.

Now this we say, dear little hearers; namely, that all mothers in each point resemble this: their tenderness is equal and but one; the virtue is alike in every heart; the colouring is the same, and nothing but the shades are different. They all love alike: but do not show the ardour of their love like one another. Neither, though perhaps there may be nothing in the world to equal motherly affection, should
you

you think a father is without the requisite degree of love and kindness in his composition. Little ones, you know all this, that daily are receiving proofs of fatherly as well as motherly affection. The affection of a mother may be much more tender, but a father's is more active; the affection of a mother may be purer, but a father's, stronger: and if so, what obligations are you not, at this peculiar season, under, now, that you are just upon the point of leaving school, to pass a month or more beneath your parents' roof?—what obligation, we repeat, are you not under, to refrain from vexing, by your conduct, those who vie with one another in procuring you a thousand pleasures?

And what conduct will complete this filial purpose? You must make it all your study to rejoice them by your conduct, and the rest will follow. They are no task masters: they will not require you to make bricks without first giving you the necessary straw to burn them: this is what we call a figurative way of speaking, and it means, they will be far from laying any hardships on you; for king Solomon informs us, in the chapter out of which our text is taken, that in matters of religion, God, our heavenly

heavenly father, lays no painful duty on us; when he says: "*My son, by what I have just writ, be thou admonished; for of making many books we see no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh: so hear the sum and substance of the whole affair. Fear God and cleave to his commandments; this is man's whole duty.*"

This, the wise man gives us as his notion of God's moderation in prescribing his commands; and such, we say too, is the moderation of all parents in prescribing theirs; since in the matter of a child-like conduct, every precept is reduced to this: "dear little ones, give honour to your parents, and be guided by their will: this likewise is a child's whole duty."

But to go a little further, if you wish we should, into particulars; we counsel you, that when at home, you give a little of the day to study. Such an interval, twice taken from the year, not only keeps you from advancing in the work of learning all that time, but makes you as we say, unlearn what you had really obtained. Perhaps, two hours, or less to some capacities, and more to others, every morning, will suffice; and surely this is no great burden. Burden? Is it not a real recreation? Do you never find, that in the midst of pleasure, you are restless or uneasy,

easy, and want something that would change the scene? Of every state in life, that surely is the worst when we have nothing on our hands to do. And be assured, that were your life all holidays, you would be miserable. Study, mix'd with pleasure, is the thing you ought to look for; and not only as you wish in future to know something, but would now be happy. In addition to this little interval, thus taken from your holidays, and set apart for study, we have only to enjoin you a behaviour full of duty to your parents, and of kindness to those brothers, sisters, and relations, you may pass away the time with. Let not your good parents' hearts be grieved by those too frequent bickerings and that jarring which prevail among relations. They deserve a different treatment from you. All they wish for is to make you happy, and particularly, during your vacation; upon which account alone, if they were not your parents, you must own they should not be the only people you would make unhappy by your presence.

Do not think, dear children, that this earnest exhortation will do nothing farther than make good one single purpose only: for, provided you conform to these instructions during your vaca-

vacation merely, you will then be in an admirable frame of mind for going on to the observance of all other duties. It is no ways likely you should be good children for a month or thereabouts, and then no longer; but your goodness will extend itself much farther. So too, is it no ways likely you should be observant of your parents, or desirous to afford them joy and satisfaction by that conduct you pursue, and have no other virtue; but from this observance of your parents, you will certainly become good brothers, or good sisters, good relations, or good friends, and so forth. All the virtues love to dwell with one another; as do likewise all the vices: so that any child, or other person, who can bring himself to keep but one of the commandments, is, on that account alone, disposed to keep the rest: and thus too, may the observation of Christ Jesus be explained: that, "he who breaks but one of the commandments, does the same as he who breaks the whole."

With this we take our leave, dear little friends, and close the present subject. It has been of such a kind as not to give us any opportunity of using that peculiar form of speaking that pre-
vailingly affects young minds. We own we are
not

not pleased ourself with the discourse, so much as we could wish: the doctrine notwithstanding is important: nothing less than that of using some small portion of your time in such a manner as to prove in future beneficial to you; for you cannot (to repeat once more the observation) show yourselves at present duteous and obedient children, and not prove hereafter, for that very reason, likelier to become good men or women: neither can you with discretion use that portion of your time which custom has divided from the rest, and set apart for relaxation, but by such a usage you must lay a firm foundation for the proper use of *that* you spend at school. And surely, you have every reason to employ your youth as well as possibly you can; for be assured, a time will come when nothing but the acquisition of sound knowledge and the exercise of virtue will afford you any satisfaction. How unhappy a consideration therefore would it be, if you should see that time draw near, and be convinced you had not used your youth in such a manner as to gain the least degree of satisfaction. Shall your preacher frankly tell you that himself has not, at all times been so sensible as now he is, that in the end this time would come to him? And, though by the Almighty's

Almighty's grace he did in some degree addict himself while young, to study, and had *some* affection for his parents, still, dear children, he did neither duty as he should have done: perhaps not half enough addict himself to study or esteem his parents. God be, notwithstanding, praised for all things, whose efficient grace has made him what he is; and only to that grace can he ascribe it, that at present while he feels within him every thing speed swiftly to decay, he is not wholly void of satisfaction. May the God, to whom by virtue of your childhood you are precious, make you of his grace more studious and more duteous; and in time, from contemplations of the past, may you enjoy more satisfaction. Be it so, through Jesus Christ, &c.

T H E H Y M N.

IN all my little wants, oh Lord,
To thee I will repair,
And supplicate thy bounteous grace,
With earnestness of prayer:
A single hour there cannot be,
But I must stand in need of thee.

So

So too, since now the time draws nigh,
That home return'd once more,
My parents I shall see, if thou,
Permit it, as before :
My prayer to thee I will address,
That the glad meeting thou would'st bless.

And grant, that while beneath their roof,
Well pleas'd I make my stay,
Them my behaviour too may please,
Remark'd from day to day ;
Never their spirit let *me* grieve,
Who from their love so much receive;

S E R M O N IX.

ON THE GRACE OF GOD.

GENESIS xliii. v. 29.

God be gracious unto thee my son.

IN this sermon, dear disciples, we present you with a much more efficacious motive to be virtuous, than in all we have already put together ; or in any of the rest that are to constitute this manual. True it is, indeed, your preacher, tenderly saluting those he is so fond of, and even clasping them with ardour to his heart, might say with him from whom our text is taken, *God be gracious to you ;* but then, what is he ? A man without account or estimation, save indeed within a very circumscribed or narrow circle. The idea is, that those who have been educated in the school of tribulation, or affliction, are most likely to become proficient in the science of salvation ; that is, virtue. But what school of tribulation has brought up the preacher ? Thanks be to that
 God

God who pours his benefits upon us, *all his ways have hitherto been ways of pleasantness, and all his paths have hitherto been paths of peace.* Let him adore God's providence for those effusions of his mercy he has shewn, by spreading for him in the wilderness, a table ; while residing in the crowded city, others, better than himself, have been without a meal. He has not sought his cross, nor yet has God thought fit to lay it on him. God holds blessings in his hand, as well as crosses. Happy they on whom, in his proceedings, he dispenses either, if they are but conscious of the hand that blesses or afflicts them. They shall surely be the better for such visitations, whether they be made in wrath or pleasure.

It would, therefore, be no compliment to virtue, should a man of such description, as belong to men in general,—should a man of such description, we repeat, affectionately clasp you to his bosom, little hearers, and say this: “ May God, dear son or daughter, be in future gracious to you.” It is very easy, you will own, for any one, whenever he thinks proper, to address the circle round him with good wishes ; for good wishes, as the expression goes, *cost* nothing ; and accordingly, those
wishes

wishes which civility, or, if you please, politeness puts into our lips, *mean* nothing. They are such as we may call the common cant peculiar to the day. But what would you imagine of a man or woman who, embracing you with ardour, like a treasure, and whose life had been a series of misfortunes springing from a certain principle of action,—what, we say, would you imagine, if, while such a man or woman held you in his arms, and no one could dispute the warmth of his affections, he should pray to God that you might be directed by the self same principle of action, and pronounce this prayer in such an energetic manner, as to show he thought he could not give you a more solid proof of his affection.

Now this question may be asked respecting those few words that constitute the text, viz. *May God be gracious unto thee my son.* They are the salutation of that Joseph you have often read of in the bible, to his brother Benjamin. This Benjamin, in some sort, was his only brother. Joseph had ten more; but then *his* mother Rachael, was not *theirs*. The unhappy Joseph, as you know, had been betrayed and sold by their unnatural combination, and for thirteen years, which nearly was the time
since

Since he was torn from his afflicted father and his native country, had experienced a variety of sufferings, having cruelly been cast into a prison for no crime, but on the other hand, dear children, for a virtue—for the virtue of refusing to commit a crime that would have made his master very wretched. This refusal, on his part, was owing to God's grace within his bosom, that restrained him from the perpetration of a crime which many are so apt to fancy very sweet. This grace of God, one should imagine, would have saved him from the miseries he underwent; but yet, as we have said already, in itself it was the cause of his unhappiness; yet was not the creator's justice, or his mercy, to be taxed in this, because the unhappiness of Joseph was to end in happiness. He had not seen his brother Benjamin for thirteen years and upwards, and when Providence, as we have mentioned in our seventh discourse of *family affection*, brought them unexpectedly together, Joseph let us know his bowels yearned for Benjamin: he fell upon his neck, he kissed him, and omitting every salutation from among the number, some would have supposed more suited to an interview so tender,

tender, said, *may God be gracious unto thee my son.*

Let us consider what this salutation meant, if Joseph, in the yearning of his bowels, had been minded to express his wishes more at large. "Dear brother; dear, dear Benjamin," he would have said, "you that alone I can
"with truth account my brother, all the rest,
"which is a circumstance you little think of,
"having cruelly conspired to sell me for a slave!
"my father trained me early to a life of virtue: I was taught to think of my creator in my youth; and Jacob loved me more
"than any of his children, but yourself. Those
"other children sold me for a slave; and I was
"brought a stranger here into the land of
"Egypt. I became a servant in the dwelling
"of a lord: his wife, whom God forgive for
"such a crime as she devised against her own
"fidelity, as well as my good character,
"which was the only jewel I possessed to recommend me, so that I might earn a bit of
"bread, where Providence had fixed me as a
"bondman,—Yes, dear Benjamin, I say his
"wife contrived to get me thrown into a prison.
"God, I thought, was present with me in that
"gloomy habitation; yet I could not but regret
"gret

“ gret my being thus divided from all inter-
“ course with human kind for two whole years,
“ since such a length of time was I kept lan-
“ guishing in prison. Such, alas! was the sad
“ fruit, the wages I received, the bitter conse-
“ quences of God’s grace within my heart. I
“ suffered nothing but affliction; and not only
“ was I separated from a father, who so dearly
“ loved me, but condemned to fetters like a
“ common culprit. Such is sometimes the
“ reward with which God pays his servants;
“ notwithstanding which, dear Benjamin, let
“ me conjure you never to lose sight of God;
“ and may he in return be gracious unto you,
“ although his grace has been attended with
“ such bitter fruits to me.”

At this description of the dismal situation Joseph was reduced to, we can easily suppose, your inexperienced hearts revolt at the idea of his counsel; and which counsel we have likewise made our own, in this discourse. “ What I
“ recommend us,” you will say, “ to cherish
“ in our hearts that grace which brought on
“ Joseph such calamity?” Yes, children, we *do*
recommend you, notwithstanding the harsh treat-
ment Joseph met with at men’s hands, to che-
rish in your hearts that grace we speak of, for you

have not heard the whole; since God, in the adversity of Joseph, made provision, not alone for his advancement in the realm, when he was brought from prison, and promoted to the rank of governor in Egypt, but provision likewise for the welfare of a people greater far in number, we might say, than live in this whole kingdom. Did not Joseph find his recompense in this advancement? But, perhaps, the honour such a government involves, has nothing in it to attract your notice. Let me tell you then, as what will certainly much more affect you, that though God's good grace did not preserve him from the wretchedness of slavery and a prison, yet it put him into such a situation, that in future he provided bread to feed the wants of an affectionate and tender father, who, together with his family, would otherwise have perished in a famine that laid waste the land of Canaan. To this act, dear children, we would rivet your attention: for "what glory," very probably your artless innocence may say, and say so with the greatest reason, "was there in such elevation to the "rank of governor in Egypt? What to us is "the idea of a governor in Egypt?" True—but then to feed the cravings of a famished father,

ther, and contribute to the life and being of the
 very person who first gave *us* life and being!
 Oh what glory this for children, in whose bo-
 som's nature, not to mention grace, is preva-
 lent! Enjoy the triumphs of your gentleness,
 sweet spirits of affection; and to melt your
 sensibility still further, think what different
 ideas Jacob must have felt within him first when
 he considered Joseph,—Joseph, for whose little
 frame, in his affection, he had made a coat of
 many colours,—first, we say, when he con-
 sidered Joseph torn in pieces by wild beasts,
 and said: *Ah me, my son is certainly devoured!*
 then, secondly, when he was apprehensive Ben-
 jamin would likewise follow. We, for our
 part, can conceive we see the old man lifting
 up his eyes to heaven, and saying, “Rachael,
 “his afflicted mother, died to give him life,
 “and when expiring called him, as he was to
 “her, Benoni, or the son of sorrow; therefore
 “he shall not go down to Egypt; for already
 “Joseph has been sundered from me, and
 “should mischief fall on my beloved Benjamin,
 “as you are travelling, then shall you bring
 “down with sorrow to the grave these hairs of
 “mine, that grief, much more than time, has
 “rendered grey already.” Think, we say,

dear little ones, what different ideas Jacob must have felt within him, when he uttered these ejaculations, and when afterward the waggons Joseph had dispatched to bring him down into the land of Egypt, and the arms of a dear son he had so long imagined dead, revived his spirits, and he said: "Great God! my Joseph is yet living! I will go and see him then before I die."

With Joseph, then, we wish that the Almighty would be gracious to you, little children. You will find his grace the richest treasure that can issue from the storehouse of his mercy. And what difference is there not, dear friends, between a human being who has been solicitous, in his first youth, to cherish and improve God's grace, when early planted in his bosom, and another that has hid it in a napkin, or still worse, perhaps entirely despised it. Oh the inexpressible advantages annexed to such a cultivation of God's grace, as we are recommending! May God's grace not only be poured down on you, but on the other hand, may you be careful likewise so to till the soil designed for its reception, that the blessed dews of heaven may not be poured upon it to no purpose. In your infancy, dear children, is the time for cherishing—

cherishing this grace; and how much greater is not the advantage you possess at present over men advanced to years of perfect reason and reflection! How much brighter does not your simplicity shine forth, than all the wisdom of the learned! They may write whole volumes in defining what God is, while you may say you love him. Humble love shall soar to heaven, and lift the infant mind up; while proud wisdom shall infallibly weigh down the philosophic soul replenished with it, if that wisdom have not in its composition the superior gift of love. If you neglect this love while you are children, and not think of God, which is the same as if you were to hate him, what a dreadful probability must we not think it, that you will not, in the time of your maturity, attain to love him. The evangelist, St. John, says: *little children, there is no such thing as fear in love*: but they who do not set about the work of loving God till they have come to years of reason, which implies the perpetration of much sin, are agitated by the recollection of that sin, and fear lest their affection, when at last they set about the offer of it, should not be vouchsafed: *but perfect love, the evangelist continues, casts out fear*; and childhood is the season

when the love of human beings is most perfect.

For this grace, then, God is to bestow upon you, children, know it is your duty first to love him; and not that alone, but your essential duty; for your catechism says, *he is a jealous God*, who, if you do not love him, will most surely visit your iniquities, not only in yourselves, but in your children, and your children's children, and their children likewise. And is God indeed so jealous of his rights? No doubt he is, and with the greatest justice: for, reflect on grace, the fairest gift omnipotence itself can possibly bestow; and then reflect on love, which is the thanks he claims for giving you so fair a gift: he bids you love him; or, in other words, he bids you taste that happiness which love diffuses through the bosom. If, then, careless of your happiness, you will not love him, what should you expect, but that his indignation will be raised against you? How contemptible and trifling is not all the love your earthly parents, or a friend, are authorised to claim, when weighed against that love God claims! and yet, your earthly parents, or a friend, are certainly entitled to be jealous, if you pay them not that love they have endeavoured, by their

benefits

benefits bestowed upon you, to deserve. Upon a subject such as this, your preacher speaks from what is called experience. Having cast his eyes on some among you, whose benignity of look without, he thought, proclaimed the candour of the heart within; whose form and fashion were not without pleasure to be looked at, as the loveliest work of him whose works are all so lovely, and whose countenances were a book in which the eye might read good things, at such a sight, he says, when his whole heart resigned itself to love for the delightful objects he beheld, and sought by every means to do them good, uniting with enchanting looks an inclination to indulge no barren love within his heart, but such as should be beneficial to the several parties, would you then have blamed him, if, perceiving them insensible to so much love, he had been jealous of their want of feeling? No, no, no. God, then, whose love is infinitely greater, cannot but be jealous of your want of feeling, if you show yourselves insensible to his abundant love.

We finish: and may God bestow his overflowing grace upon you. May he rain into your hearts the blessed dews of heaven to ferti-

mon

G. 4.

lize

lize that grain of seed which shall, in time, become a fair, large tree. May he mature that pearl which, if you had it not, it would be nothing but your interest to dispose of all things you possess and buy. May he enable you to gain this necessary previous knowledge, that in every season of your life no circumstance will give you favour in the sight of other men, or estimation in your own, except this grace. If his good providence reserve you for a prosperous situation in the world, may you enjoy the happiness of such a situation, by employing it in such a manner as to work out your salvation; as you will do, if you thank the giver, and not place your contemplation on the gift, in such a way as to forget him: but if his good pleasure should reverse the promise of your childhood, and when men or women, you should come to poverty, or any other sort of sorrow, may his grace still dwell within your hearts, and teach you, how much happier is your lot, though in a humble situation, yet resigned to his direction, and dependant on his will, than the condition of those men, who, being proud in their exalted station, avaricious in the midst of their abundance, and unthankful to the giver of their worldly blessings, go from

from sin to sin, and are the sport of fortune in this world, beyond whose perishing enjoyments, they have no one hope. Dear children, may God's mercy save you from the lot of these unhappy men, and give you, on the other hand, the exalted situation the abundance and the blessing which his grace will be in future crowned with. By what other wish can we so much evince the fervour of our friendship and affection for you. Hear us, we beseech thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

OF every blessing in the stores
 Of God's almighty mind,
 Grace is the richest, fairest, best,
 Descending on mankind.

This blessing to deserve—our love:
 He condescends to claim:
 Stupendous condescension this!
 Too great for words to name!

Give me this grace then ; this best gift

Oh Lord bestow on me ;

Till thou consent I will not cease

In prayer to bend my knee

And when the blessing I have gain'd :

Oh make me happier still ;

And with that love thy love requires,

Deign my whole heart to fill.

THE HYMN

Of every blessing in the store

Of God's almighty hand,

Grace is the richest, fairest, best,

Descending on mankind.

This blessing to deserve—our love

He condescends to claim ;

Responders' consention this !

Too great for words to name !

Give

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SERMON

SERMON X.

ON MODESTY.

MATTHEW xii. v. 34.

*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth
speaketh.*

FROM this assertion of the son of God, it follows, that the language we make use of is a proof of what is in our heart; and consequently, that provided what we utter is not proper to be spoken, sin is in the heart; which sin may manifest itself in act, as well as conversation. But what occupy the heart of human beings, are their thoughts; of course then, when they sin, they do so, not in action or in conversation only, but in thought as well.

This preface being made, we come at present, in the order of our plan, to give you some instructions on the article of modesty. This modesty, as we may properly define the word, consists in saying or in doing nothing those that may be our companions, at the mo-

ment, would not wish should take up their attention ; nothing our companions would desire they had not been acquainted with ; and more particularly, nothing that may spread a blush upon the cheek of any female who may happen to be with us when the impropriety is said or done.

This want of modesty in speech or action, as no other can be taken notice of by those we mix with, would alone be reprehensible or to be blamed : but, as God knows our thoughts, it follows that immodesty in thought is to be looked on as a sin, no less than what is evidenced by what we say or do.

Of course, whenever, little friends, you may be tempted either first of all to *do* ; or in the next place, *speak* ; or thirdly, *think* immodestly, that awful question put by Joseph to his mistress should be present to your minds, and you should ask yourselves how you can venture on so great a wickedness, *and sin*, as are the very words of Joseph, *against God* ?

Let none of those about you that have reached the years of manhood, but are totally unanxious for your future welfare in the world, and unaffected by the loveliness of human nature shown us in the state of childhood, say as follows ;
that

that an apt or witty speech, which makes them smile at child-like quaintness, and much more, a thought or fancy, which you may confine within your hearts, is nothing. These excuses are assigned by those, (to place their conduct in the fairest point of sight) who prove that they would have no child they are acquainted with, trained up to virtue, or who, possibly, are vicious and corrupt themselves. For our part, we discern the most alarming consequences that may easily, and often do, ensue from an immodesty of even thought. Immodesty of thought leads forward to immodesty of speech, and after to immodesty of action; and in this immodesty of action, lies the source of those enormities that ruin multitudes.

For every vice that can be perpetrated, must have had its first beginning; and there never was a child, a man, or woman, vicious all at once, or of a sudden. Wickedness, as well as virtue, has a gradual progress; and how natural is not the transition, that is passage, first from thought to speech, and then from speech to action! After this, will parents, when their little ones are by to mark them, unreservedly indulge in loose or vicious conversation, as too many of the times we live in, do? Their
little

little ones are apt to think of what they "hear. Such things," they say, "our parents would not utter, were it wrong to do so."

They keep brooding on the conversations they are often present at; they imitate them by degrees; and lay the root of actual wickedness within their little hearts. Thus, therefore, tho' not absolutely by the project or contrivance of too thoughtless parents, is the ground-work of their children's wretchedness effected; that is, of their sins: for always must this wretchedness, together with this sin, be close companions. Would those parents with their children should be victims thus to wretchedness and sin? They would not. If then, they should prove such victims at a future time of life, what consolation will those parents find in the idea that they did not wish it should be so, and that themselves are but the innocent, if we may use that word, or unintended authors of their children's ruin?

Seeing, then, that from small causes, grievous consequences may ensue, from an immodesty of thought and speech indulged in by the rising generation, nothing less than an immodesty of action in the time of their maturity: and since from that which they may say, is nothing,

or

or to mend the expressions, others for them; since we know that the simplicity of childhood will not of itself so palliate any crime; the ruin of their morals may ensue in future; can we be considered too officious when we recommend that parents keep a guard upon their tongues, at least when present with their children, so that they may never have so many opportunities of being by degrees habituated to a vice, that seems a very ripe one in the present generation of mankind? Alas! must it not be sufficient that whatever company the innocent now, generally mix with, they are everlastingly exposed to hear those double meanings, and that filthiness, as the apostle Paul entitles it, that foolish prating and that jesting which is not convenient, with those songs (to call them by a name the prophet uses), of the daughters of Samaria, and those books that need not here have their description, while the sacred poetry of Sion, and the Bible, almost are forgotten.

You that are, of unavoidable necessity, much more exposed to the corruption of this world, because you are to mingle with society much more than those who are in general called the softer sex, we speak not on this article so earnestly

nestly to you: we only caution you to shun those conversations, and those books, which cannot but corrupt your innocence, if with a favourable ear you listen to the one, or find delight and entertainment when you read the other. Joseph, that already we have mentioned, certainly did neither; or, when tempted by a wicked woman to that action which bad conversation and bad books so generally lead to, we may take upon us to assert, he would not have returned for answer, he could never bring himself to do so great a wickedness and sin against his God. No, no: the common consequence attendant on bad conversation and bad books is this,—that as, in general, we sit down to share them with a wandering mind; so too we quit them with a wounded heart. To those that we are now addressing, we persuade ourself this intimation is enough.

But you, we so much love to talk with; you, for whose dear sakes we would consume ourselves in efforts, if they might but save your present innocent simplicity from those temptations which are sure to throng about your gentle persons; you, in whose soft sex are represented all the virtues, so that they may captivate the more;—and would to God, that by the

the precepts, now communicated, we could make you every one that hear us, the fit substitute or likeness of some virtue for the generation, your contemporaries, to consider, and admire *the beauty*, as in scripture, and the great sublimity of eastern language, you may find it called, *of holiness*, as men now fix their contemplation on the statue of some female, and applaud its just proportions;—you, we say, whose countenances, when you hear what decency should not have said, express the sense within you by such deeply glowing colours, we conjure you, now while in the purity of your unspotted nature you can do so, to suppress within you every thought that leans towards this immodesty. Guard well your thoughts, fair models of simplicity or gentleness, and leave the rest to God. You are at present, in his estimation, every one among you, that chaste dove, whom Jesus, in the testament, commanded his disciples to resemble in their harmlessness; but if, by giving way to thoughts of an immodest nature, you proceed to words and actions of like dreadful tendency, you will contract, not as Christ Jesus said upon the same occasion, the great wisdom of the serpent, which he bad his twelve disciples imitate, but,

on

on the other hand, the fraud and malice of the serpent, by whose arts it came to pass that the Almighty, grieving he had made the world and all things, afterward destroyed it with a flood of waters. You will have his guilt to answer for; and who can tell but that the meaning, tho' not words of which his sentence was composed: *upon thy belly shalt thou go, and eat dust only, all the days thou livest,* will be accomplished in you: namely.—“ You shall find even here, the
 “ punishment deserved by your iniquity, of
 “ which the root was laid in that immodesty
 “ you cherished in your childhood, tho' so opposite to uncorrupt and unaffected nature;
 “ and shall bow your head down to the dust,
 “ that you may get from the hard hand of charity a wretched bit of bread to keep life in
 “ you.” This indeed, that is to say, this poverty, is not the worst part of the sentence God denounces upon guilt. It must however be confessed, since everlasting misery will likewise be its punishment, an aggravation of the matter, that while many would do every thing to shun the horrors of a state of poverty, for they are visible, there are but few, who would avoid the horrors of a future punishment, for which
 and, *eternum est malum* the

the reason must be this, since surely there can be no other, that they are not visible. And yet, with you Eliza, was the dread of poverty, an unavailing thing. Why cannot you then speak, in lieu of me, to these dear little ones? You would inform them, you compare your present state of Torrow, with the state it might have been. Alas! would you cry out "Why did I not secure myself in the possession of that peace, which, in my childhood, I enjoyed? Accursed be the moment when, persuaded though I was by reason, of my duty, I resigned myself to the pernicious influence of those bad examples an unnatural parent did not hesitate to hold me out; Those happy days that I might sweetly have enjoyed, had I but passed them in the love and fear of God, oh whither are they fled? By my behaviour, easily I might have made the young respect me, and the old admire my modesty. All those, to whom my name was mentioned, might have wished to know me; and, when known, would have esteemed me: but instead of this fair prospect, what am I reserved to? I go up and down in want of food and raiment. I am even destitute of strength sufficient to procure myself a livelihood, however scanty, by my labour; and but few will
" give

"give me so much as a morsel of the hardest
 "bread to eat, tho' I implore it as a charity."
 Poor destitute Eliza! you had no one friend
 to bring you up to virtue in your childhood.
 You were cherished in the lap of an apparent
 plenty, but not fostered in the bosom of true
 fatherly affection. Providence deprived you of
 a mother, when you hung upon the breast.
 Your ear was very early used to oaths and ex-
 cursations. They were all, a wretched father
 left you; and the patrimony has been bitter in
 its consequences to your peace: he died, and
 having wasted all his substance, left you penny-
 less. You were exposed betimes to a corrupt
 and cruel world. Corrupt, alas! yourself, you
 married. Your propensity to vice was no
 ways likely to confirm a husband in the way of
 virtue, being as he was, unsettled in his princi-
 ples. He violated a strict law established for
 the benefit of trade, which therefore is at all
 times rigidly enforced; and, horrible to tell
 you, little friends! he suffered in the common
 ignominious way. Then, once again were
 you exposed, and after having rioted in plenty
 for a little season, felt the weight of poverty
 with greater aggravation than before, because
 you were become more guilty. The com-
 passioning

passionating bosom of a female, bred to that profession which, perhaps too rashly, men consider as disgraceful, pitied your necessity; and entering an assembly, she collected contributions to relieve you. Other friends might, in the sequel, very likely have sprung up, but their assistance would have been too late; for vice had struck deep root in your unhappy bosom. You consumed in idleness, the aid your charitable friend had thus procured you for a very different purpose. You took up your stand where passers were most numerous, at the corner of a street, and bargained with them for your beauties, which were not, as yet, all utterly extinct beneath the double weight of guilty penury and loathsome sickness. You had been before with convicts in a jail, and now were often with sick people in a workhouse. After this, the preacher lost you for a season; till, at last, one day he met you in the way of labouring, as he thought, to get an honest living; for an instrument of harvest work was in your hand: but oh, how wretched an appearance! Rags enveloped now that body, which in former days the finest silk and linens were procured at any price to cover. At the sight of one, with whom in happier seasons you

you had been acquainted, you stopt short; you shook your head. He could not speak himself. He thought of showing you his pity in a way adapted to his slender circumstances: you received his alms; and, in receiving it, held forth that arm, now palsied and emaciated, not thro' age, but want; that arm which formerly, when soft and delicate, you had stretched out to help him to the choicest meats upon your husband's table. He turned from you; for a pittance was the all he had to give; and both alike were suffering; since which time, he has not seen you. Possibly, e'er this, your sin and your existence have concluded both together.

Dearest little friends, take warning by this sad example. We design not to insinuate that such an exit is the necessary consequence entailed upon immodesty in childhood: but that fortune, which has happened once to any individual, it is prudence to consider may befall another. Be it always present to your mind, and oh, do thou, oh God, convince them in their present season, and before they grow to years of reason and discretion, that their little bodies, being meant as temples for thy holy spirit to reside in, they should keep their minds from every

every thought that may defile them, and their tongues from every word which those unhappy hearts that have a criminal abundance, love to utter. Give them, of thy grace, to comprehend that granting any thing indecent chance to tempt them, they should not imagine it sufficient to remove their sight, or turn away their ear; but that, if necessary, they should dispossess themselves of the offending limb. Enable them to know that vice, in every one has its beginning, and, of course, to shun the first temptations. Cherish in their person and their heart, that purity which renders them so lovely; and we further beg, that of thy mercy, thou would'st visit and console particularly those who, having given way to first temptations, have long forfeited their early purity, and are immersed in such impurities as lead thro' bodily disease to death. Let them be thoroughly convinced of their unhappy state, but not insensible of thy abundant mercy to receive them, as that father did his prodigal or wasteful son, when he came back, confessing he had sinned. So be it in the name of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

SINCE in the gospel I am taught,

That all I say for want of thought,

That each unmeaning idle word,

As my accuser will be heard,

When to my judge, God's only son,

I answer for the sins I've done,

What shall I say, or how appear,

If guilty words, not fit to hear,

Have during life my lips defil'd:

What will excuse a shameless child,

Who taught indecency to shun,

Has with lewd words prophan'd his tongue?

Then let me cautiously refrain

From shameful talk and converse vain;

My tongue that God has made, should seek

At all times of his praise to speak;

Or, heavenward while my soul I bear,

Implore his gifts in fervent prayer.

SERMON XI.

ON CRUELTY.

MATTHEW X. V. 29.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your father.

THE Saviour here, in his accustomed manner, takes an obvious way to show the dearness of his father's whole creation to him: and in Proverbs, Solomon informs us, that *a righteous man regards the life*, for such is the expression, *of his beast*. Both these assertions put together, furnish us with matter for this exhortation; and accordingly, beloved little ones, we ask what compliment would such a phrase, as follows, be to your simplicity or innocence: "a prudent child regards his beast," that is to say, his dog, for instance, or his bird, which he has bought for money. There would be no compliment in such a saying to you: but supposing Solomon had worded the expression just as in our notion it should run, and

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said:

said: "a merciful or pitying-hearted child regards it," he would then have shown the natural good temper of a little being, not yet grown to manhood; while, had he made use of such an epithet as *prudent*, this would have been nothing but declaring his idea that a child, deserving such an appellation, would regard whatever cost him money: but the prophet, using such a phrase as we have quoted, does not mean to show the mercy of a righteous man, as it suggests itself from interested motives; for, in that case, he would certainly have said a *cunning*, rather than a *righteous* man; nor does he, by the expression "beast," mean nothing but the creature he is used to ride upon; his horse, which is a creature generally treated with consideration by its owner, not because that owner is a righteous man, but merely from prudential motives: were it otherwise, there would not have appeared the least necessity for such a writer as king Solomon, to place among his proverbs, as a matter of instruction, what the world, before his time, was well acquainted with. His meaning was to show that treatment every creature ought to meet with at men's hands.

This

This last expression, then, of Solomon, perhaps, would have been more significant, if it had been "a righteous man regards the life of every creature," or a man possessed of notions, that in every thing he should endeavour to affect or imitate the mercy of his maker, which, without presumption, he may do; while all the attributes of God, such as his wisdom, power, and grandeur, are not to be copied. You will pardon the digression we are now upon the point of making, to evince how much our ignorance is opposite to the Almighty's knowledge; how extremely so our imbecility to his omnipotence; how inconceivably beneath his soaring height our creeping situation of humility: for while eternal wisdom was preparing for the welfare of the future Jewish nation, in the patriarch Joseph's undeserved confinement, human ignorance, with some reason, might have visited the patriarch in his prison, and cried out: "See, miserable man, the consequence of your fine notions in forbearing to commit a sin, as you expressed it, against God!" While everlasting power was fixing, on the basis of humility, that faith, preached first of all by simple fishermen, whose efforts, in the end, discredited the Roman idols,

human weakness might have whispered in their ear, as follows: "Can you hope to prove successful in this undertaking, while the wisest man in Athens lost his life for setting up a new religion?" And, while God, the lofty one inhabiting eternity, has long before what we consider the *beginning*, constantly been looking down from heaven, have not successively the several generations of mankind been constantly appearing, and soon after disappearing? Such, then, is the wisdom, power, and grandeur of God's majesty, which we can never imitate; but, in his mercy, we may lawfully consider him our model, and *be perfect*, in the language of Christ Jesus, *even as our heavenly father*.

Once more, therefore, we repeat the assertion of king Solomon, but with the emendation just now hinted, and inform you, that "a righteous man regards the life of every creature;" being conscious that a sparrow falls not to the ground but by permission of his father. But this righteous man—what is he? One who is least distant from the innocence of nature in that state when human beings are incapable of sin; which state is that of childhood. If, then, in the word of God, we could

could have found a text quite suited to the subject of this exhortation, and the age of those young people we instruct, it would have been as follows, or the like: "a child regards the life of every creature." But what Solomon has said means just as much; and what the text contains, as mentioned by Christ Jesus, is the reason why a righteous man regards the life of every creature; namely, since those birds, called sparrows, common though they are, and notwithstanding two are sold for such a trifling piece of money as a farthing, are so dear to the Almighty, that not one among them perishes without his special leave. Let it then be established, that a child, or rather such a being as evinces the demeanour of a child, regards the life of every creature.

But dear little company, for this let us appeal as solemnly as words will let us, to your consciences: for do you spare the life of every creature, such we mean as you are not in fear of? Do you mercifully look upon an insect? Do you loathe those thousand thoughtless cruelties so generally practised by those thousand thoughtless children that are never taught how odious such a sin should be considered in God's sight? We ask you these few questions; for

our partiality in your behalf, beholding you in such a light as nature and God's providence designed you should be placed in, must not so far take away our senses as to make us fancy you incapable of every sin. We know that bleeding cruelties are perpetrated on the brute creation by too many children; and those, such as they are no ways tempted to, excepting for the sake of sport and pastime, which indeed must aggravate the wickedness. Supposing, then, you have been guilty of such practices, hear in what terms your teacher, notwithstanding his affection, is compelled to blame you; and, as Paul advises those who have been guilty of the vice called stealing, to repent and steal no more; so too, do you that have been guilty of the vice we speak of, make the best atonement in your power, by being, for the time to come, no longer guilty of it.

For *why boastest thou*, says David, in his book of psalms, *thou tyrant, thy capacity of doing mischief, while God's goodness every day is manifested?* But, what then? Is this, dear children, this severity of language, this interrogation, or this question of rebuke, addressed to you? Undoubtedly it should be uttered with much greater vehemence to men whose hearts are hardened
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by the frequent repetition of their sin; yet still, that circumstance does not preclude the application to those little tyrants; for that name must every tyranny be taxed with; who permit the natural sweetness of their disposition to be spotted with atrocious acts of blood. Hear then, what God is, and consider afterward what you yourself are to be called.

God is a being that delights to render every creature happy; who inhabiting eternity, as we have said already, and possessing the immediate center of his works, rejoices to diffuse existence round him; who, as David, in another passage, tells us, *openeth wide his hand, and filleth all things in the world with plenteousness*; who feeds the ravens in their nest; and on whose bounty all the other birds depend, receiving their accustomed food at the arrival of the proper season. These, and many other tenderneſſes, we might quote for your instruction, as a proof that the Almighty cares for all the brute creation; but these instances are sure sufficient. Let us now, then, see how greatly God evinces his solicitude, or favour, to the human race, of which you, little children, (and in this address we speak to every one among you singly) are a part: He has surrounded you, on all sides

with a host of living creatures, whose variety and beauty must be looked upon as charming: some of those, who have no hurtful qualities, he has impressed with a desire to come and play before you; and withdrawn the rest that are of savage nature, into distant countries; or if any are inhabitants of that you live in, he has separated them from your abode, and caused them to reside in deserts, at a distance from you, where they howl for provender, and never, or at least, dear children, never in the day time, venture to come forth and trouble you. These sure are tokens of his wish for your accommodation, comfort, and convenience from without; while, similar to this, within your habitations, and about your person, he has been no less solicitous to make you happy: your exterior form, your countenance and figure, he has cloathed with all those beauties that conduce to make you interesting in the eye of those that see you; he has given you parents, whose affection teaches them to love you dearly, and made every one your friend of those you have to do with. From these circumstances, and a thousand other, which we have not time sufficient to enumerate within the limits of a sermon, we may say, with David, he he is daily manifesting

festing forth his goodness, while you boast that, like a tyrant, you are able to do mischief. We will not sum up, in this discourse, the several cruelties by children practised on the brute creation. Let it be sufficient we thus hint our knowledge that such cruelties are practised; and may such a hint produce some reformation in you, a suppression of the cruelties.

To you, however, if there should be any one of such description present, that by this time having gained the summit of man's boasted reason, are without the excuse of thoughtlessness for those repeated cruelties you may commit; and not that only, but who plead the custom of the time and fashion to extenuate your offence, but which enhances the enormity thereof; how can you urge that God approves of that diversion which is founded on the anguish of the creatures he has formed? Your preacher figures to himself that, while he speaks, the unfeeling hunt and tumult is on foot, the fearful tenant of the corn is started from its hiding place, the branching-headed monarch of the lawn is out, the animal whose wiliness or craft adds pleasure to the sport, is persecuted in his rear by a tumultuous pack, that open on him as he flies before them, and the shouting

company of those that can find pleasure in so cruel a diversion are behind, while the whole country, as it were, re-echoes to the noise. Hard hearted men! will you presume to authorise your sport by the pretence that God has given swiftness to one creature, majesty of carriage to another, and a cunning, that can scarce be baffled, to a third, that three such faculties might be contributory to your sin? What does the argument avail, but to make God the author of your cruelty? What does it tend to, but an absolute reversal of the question put by David from humanity within him? And what else can we upon such a subject ask, if God be in reality the patron of those men, within whose habitation, to adopt the dying Jacob's language, *instruments of cruelty are found*,—What can we ask, once more, excepting such a question as the following: "Tyrant, why dost thou do mischief, and make boast thereof?" Why, but *because* the goodness of thy God endureth daily.

Is it our design, then, some perhaps may ask, by such a prohibition as mankind in general will condemn, to re-establish in the world that purity of manners which subsisted in the golden age? This purity, dear friends, and this

this fictitious golden age, would we could possibly establish! which of you will say, the world would not be infinitely better for such purity of manners? Our whole view, however, is no more than to make man, in some sort, less contemptuous of the appellation *righteous*; and, we hope, no one will take upon him to assert, that righteousness would tend to our discredit. Fain would we do something to establish mercy! and, we trust, this mercy, which a certain poet, well acquainted with the human heart, describes as blessing, like the dews of heaven, will not favour the production of a harvest hurtful to us. Fain would we write up at every corner of the great metropolis, and every cross-way through the country, in large characters, so applicable to the various exigences people can be found in, that make up the moral world, DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD THOSE OTHERS IN RETURN SHOULD DO TO YOU. Fain would we rescue the Almighty's creatures from those murders they so often suffer for our sport and pastime. Fain would we preserve even one poor animal from being made the victim to a company of what the world calls sportsmen. We should then have laboured, in some manner, to promote

the cause among us of compassion, sympathy, and virtue. By the ridicule of those resolving previously to be unmoved by our persuasions, we should no wise be discouraged. That *wise* answer, which the objects of our censure frequently insist upon, and which they seem to utter with much inward satisfaction, namely, *we can see you are no sportsman*, would not raise our indignation any more than on their arguments, in favour of the eighth commandment, our reply, *sirs, we can see you are no felons*, would raise theirs.

For you, dear little ones, your tender time of life has not, as yet, subjected you to any of those guilty customs fashion every day prescribes to be assiduously followed by the votaries of fashion, for their sport and pastime: happy, therefore, are you in this circumstance; but yet much happier you, fair little ones, the softness of whose sex will totally exempt you from indulging in these customs: but, alas! you, and the other sex, have now your sports and pastimes too: let them, dear children, then, be such; and while your spirits are exhilarated, let not the imagination of the liveliest in your company have cause to put a tongue into the mouth of any creature you torment, with such rebuking

rebuking speech as follows: *This may be diversion on your side, but it is death on ours.* Refrain from hurting any of the creatures for the sake of childish entertainment; and, in future, when you come to mingle with the world, you will refrain from hurting any of the creatures for the sake of manly entertainment; for the one is most unmanly, and the other most unchild-like. It consists with the meek spirit of a child, to love and cherish every feathered creature, and to spare the tribe of beasts and insects. It consists with the magnanimous, that is to say, great hearted men, when they behold, upon their tables, an abundance of fish, flesh, and fowl, to sympathize, in some sort, with those creatures, that, perhaps, the day before had being, and to wish it were not needful to make thus a sacrifice of life for the continuation of their lives: to sacrifice it for the sake of sport, is to depart from what should be the manliness of human nature in the perfect state of reason, and the innocence of human nature, in those little beings, who are only candidates, if we may use that word, for reason.

These are the instructions, which, with all humility and deference to our betters, we presume to offer on this subject. The intention
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ought to be considered in whatever any one performs. If that be proper, then the action ought to be approved of. Candour will, in that case, put a fair interpretation on the several passages contained in this discourse, since the intention is so good. And this is the apology we have to offer our superiors. With our friends, that is to say companions, we have some pretences to stand less on the reserve; and we may pray for those whose thoughtless cruelties, this exhortation has, undoubtedly, with some degree of reason, censured. Oh! Almighty God, and father of all nature, let thy righteousness descend into the bosom of these children, and instruct them, that a sparrow even falls not to the ground, without thy absolute permission; and that therefore, though it fall, thou wilt require the blood of such a sparrow at the hand of those who may have shed it in the hour of wantonness. Enable them to know that, being righteous, they will tenderly regard the life of every creature in their power; but, being wicked, that king Solomon's assurance will be verified in their behaviour, and the tenderest mercies of their heart prove cruel. Let their waking thoughts be full of that compassion thy
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own bright example furnishes ; and then, their very dreams will prove complacent ; they will see, tho' for a different purpose what St. Peter saw, unfolded in a vision, the great sheet let down from heaven, and full of beasts, and birds, and creeping things ; and while they hear thy voice and great command, *rise, kill, and eat,* their conscience will not smite them with the thought that they have ever gone beyond it, by tormenting those good things ordained for their support. Oh great creator, whom the various animals thou hast created may call father, fix the empire of thy mercy in our bosom all together, whether we as yet fall short of perfect understanding, or have reached it ; for these last will we presume to recommend by supplication, notwithstanding many of their number be our betters ; and whenever we sit down to meat, and pray that thou would'st sanctify the creatures to our use, vouchsafe that we may have no conscious recollection that the creatures then before us have contributed to our diversion, in the hour of yielding up their breath. Preserve us from such meals as thou can'st never sanctify ; and when we beg a blessing on them, let us be enabled, with strict truth to add, by way of reason,
that

that such sanctifying grace may be vouchsafed,
because we live in such a manner as thy service
dictates. Hear us, for the sake of Jesus
Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

OH Lord, to whom are dear
The various creatures thou hast made;
With sacrilegious hands
Never their life let me invade:
Convinc'd, that should they die,
By cruelty depriv'd of breath,
Thou wilt, assuredly,
Judge me, hereafter, for their death.

Give me the grace to know,
That beasts, birds, insects, moths and flies
Expiring, feel as much
As when a man or giant dies.
A panting stag or hare,
Are no less sensible of pain
Than the inhuman crowd
That, shouting, chase them o'er the plain.

SERMON

SERMON XII. ON TRUTH IN SPEAKING.

PROVERBS XII. V. 19.

A lying tongue is but for a moment.

WE cannot possibly, dear little ones, supply you with a clearer notion of the detestation men in general entertain for lying, than by giving you to understand, what in reality is true, that if one man should be so hardy as to tax another with the guilt of having uttered an untruth or lie, this last, so taxed, would be compelled to make the other fight him; for so great is the tyrannic force of what the world calls custom and the laws of honour. There are many crimes of which we may accuse a person; we may say, that to our knowledge, such or such a one despises or neglects his parents, breaks the sabbath, frequently is overtaken with excessive drink, loves gambling, or the like, and nothing serious be the

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consequence: but to assert he lies, is an affront that blood alone can satisfy.

It matters not if he be guilty or not guilty: he must challenge his accuser: if he should not give the challenge, being thus accused, he would be reckoned infamous. Nay more; though in his heart he knew he had been guilty of the crime alledged against him, his first thought would be to vindicate his character for truth, and punish the malignant man that should proclaim him so immoral as to tell a falsity. His blood alone would satisfy the other for so foul an accusation.

How much more consistent with the laws of real honour, and the rights of innocence, or shame of conscience guilt, dear children, is not your behaviour; yours, we say, before the tyranny of fashion has enslaved you to her rules. If you are taxed with having told the thing that is not, and are guiltless, you retain your natural complexion; and that symmetry of feature, God's creating hand at first diffused thro' every region of your countenance, is still preserved. No perturbation ruffles your offenceless minds; nor do you wish the death of that ungenerous individual who has dared accuse you of so great a crime: but, if, as sometimes it will happen,
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when

when accused, you know the charge is justly founded, you turn pale ; that admirable harmony of feature so conspicuous in you, loses its proportions. You are all disordered, and without desiring any mischief may befall the life or limb of your accuser, you cry out, with every symptom of ingenuous fear, unlike the effrontery which men give proof of, who, when guilty, would persuade the world they are not ; —you cry out, we say, forgive us, we will never do the like again. How different the impression made upon us by this meek avowal, from the lips of those that now and then indeed are to be charged with falsehood, and the blustering vindication of those men whose lives are nothing but a series of continued falsehoods.

Be this vindication or apology, however, what it will, it shows us that the violence with which men justify themselves, when taxed with such a crime, arises from the thought they have of its enormity ; and very justly must the crime be held enormous, when we meditate upon the pleasingness of truth. So pleasing is this truth, that any one would wonder how mankind could be prevailed on to forego its charms, and have the least propensity to fraud ; for, by experience, we are sensible, that men do find in fraud a
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something that attracts their approbation, and that notwithstanding it appears so perfectly consistent with our nature to go forth in search of truth, we go in search of nothing less than truth. Now this propensity to fraud, by which however be it understood we mean not such as some men exercise to hurt their neighbour; (that is a degree of guilt we do not mean at present to discourse of, in the ear of such a congregation as we preach to, but a fraud of less enormity, yet still of some); this wonderful propensity to fraud, we say, is, in the first place, strengthened in the bosom of a rising generation by that complaisance which is the very soul of what men call polite or fashionable talk, and such that human beings seem afraid of speaking to each other with sincerity, or hearing others speak so. This sincerity is looked upon by those, affecting to be well acquainted with good breeding, as a churlish incivility or rudeness; and that speech which is peculiar to the reasoning creature, and should be the instrument of truth, is grown the organ of hypocrisy and lies.

A late ingenious satyrift has intimated his idea of all fraud in very striking terms, by representing that a traveller, whose adventures he describes;

describes, was thrown upon a distant coast, where horses governed other creatures, just as men do here: but when, in conversation with these horses, he described the vices prevalent in Europe, and was come to that of lying, the ingenious satyrift informs us, that the traveller's audience cut him short, by saying, they could no way guess at what he meant by such a vice, or understand to serve what end it could be had recourse to; for, said they, the tongue was given us first of all by nature to express our thoughts; and therefore, when we think it necessary to disguise our thoughts, and say the thing that is not, we forego the use for which our tongues were fashioned. Thus our satyrift exposes not the sin, but the ridiculousness of the liar; and indeed, a man, as reasonably, just before he entered on a journey, might cut off his feet with which he was to move, as give into the vice of lying.

Having thus set forth how opposite this vice of lying is to reason, let us turn your observation, little hearers, in the first place, on the text which tells you that the benefit of lying is but for a moment. Having pondered upon this a little, let us in the next place, recommend to your attention what the author of the proverbs,

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in another passage, says upon the subject: namely, *it is better to speak truth at all times*; upon which we mean our exhortation shall particularly turn: from this expression, we may certainly infer, that every sort of falsehood is not of an equal guilt; for Solomon says only, *it is better to speak truth at all times*; meaning, there may certainly be some untruths, which, in comparison of others, comprehend less sin. Now there are some untruths which people utter for the sake of sport or pastime, and for which they are without excuse; because they are not tempted in the act. Exclusively of these, there are untruths, which men may hazard first to save themselves from difficulty, danger or embarrassment; or secondly, to shun the punishment they have deserved; or thirdly, to bring mischief upon others. This last species of untruth, is absolutely what the ninth commandment, in the clearest terms, forbids. The guilt thereof is obvious, without any argument; and therefore we shall take no notice of it.

But the other two may need and claim discussion; and no doubt, if being innocent of every crime, I fear some danger may befall me; or if having really been guilty of a crime, I tremble at the punishment, and do, on either supposition,

position, utter an untruth, it has not half the guilt of one made use of to affect another's interest, his reputation, or his life. It is, in short, to be excused by those who make allowance for self love; tho' even these would not commend it. One sure way of ascertaining whether there be any wickedness, or nothing but an impropriety, (for such there will be always) in advancing an untruth, is, to examine if it hurts or benefits the speaker or another: if it neither injures nor does good to any one, it is a story uttered for the sake of pastime; and, as no one can be under any species of temptations to recur to that, you will not surely, little friends, prophane your lips in future with a story, told for pastime, if you have done so already.

Having done away this species of untruths from the account, we are to ask ourselves if, in the next place, any story we may have in contemplation, will do injury to others: if it will, we need not mention, such a story is forbid you by the law of God. And this too being thus determined on, the only sort of stories that remain are those which we imagine will not injure others, and produce some benefit or profit to ourselves; altho' perhaps, a very trifling one, as well as what will not continue any length of time.

time, according to the tenour of the text, *a lying tongue is only for a moment*. These are, as we said before, those fallacies we have recourse to, either, in the first place, for the purpose of avoiding any difficulty, danger, or embarrassment we may be in, which does not argue wickedness beforehand as the cause thereof; such, as for instance, dear disciples, should you wish to have a little recreation, and in consequence, inform your parents, governess, or master, you have done your daily task; or in the next place, for the purpose of avoiding any punishment we may be menaced with, for having done a fault, if it be proved upon us. These, and others like them, are that species of untruths which very likely we may utter, and commit no *capital* or *glaring* sin. Shall we go further for the ease or satisfaction of your conscience, and inform you, these are the untruths you may have some pretence to utter, and commit *no* sin, but only do an *impropriety*? These, certainly, must be those little fallacies which Solomon considered, when he told us, *it is better to speak truth at all times*. Had he not supposed there were some pardonable falsities, assuredly, in that case, we may think he would have said:

to, should you sin, but I will not sin at all

it is extremely wicked in itself, not to speak truth at all times.

If then, human beings must have some untruths to be indulged in, always be assured, dear little friends, before you speak, that the untruth in contemplation be of such a nature as to benefit yourselves and do no injury to others: with this caution, there must be less cause to fear you will proceed to those untruths that comprehend malignity, or that are uttered to affect another's interest, his reputation, and his life.

But of this, or of the certainty that any falsity you may incline to utter will be beneficial to yourselves, and do no wrong to others, how will you be any way convinced? Ah children! have you understanding, foresight, and sufficient penetration to obtain at will, that certainty? Believe us, little ones, it is an arduous part you take upon yourselves: your tender intellects are not adapted to so difficult a task. Your study of much easier arts perplexes you enough already, and the path to science, though your teachers go before you, and point out the way you ought to walk in, is sufficiently embarrassing. How then, without a guide, will you pursue a road that has so many turnings? — For example, should you argue with yourselves as

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follows: if I venture to say so or so;—what will the consequences be, to-day, to-morrow, the day after; or next week, next month, next year? then likewise as I mean to say what is not truth, I must remember it, and be extremely careful not to contradict myself to-morrow, the day after, or next week, next month, next year. It will be—but I break off short: a thousand questions of this nature, such as a philosopher could never answer, would present themselves, if you would go to work with proper caution, and deceive us without sinning.

For the awful situation of two persons, both convicted of this sin, affords us proof sufficient of the difficulty there must be in ascertaining whether such or such a falsity is culpable, or, as already we have said, excusable, though not to be commended: the tremendous punishment inflicted on a falsity, thought thus excusable, tho' not to be commended, marks it as a grievous crime; whereas the accompanying circumstances seem to point it out as one of benefit to those who risked it, and injurious in the interval to no one. We reduce it, children, to a narrative more obvious to your comprehension, in this manner. You,—but here we speak to no one in particular,—have had a present made you; let it be some fashionable ornament. You are acquainted with

with some piteous object of distress. The mercy of your nature whispers to you with what ease you may relieve that piteous object; namely, by disposing of that fashionable ornament, you are not any ways in need of. You communicate your wishes to a mother, no less tender hearted than yourself. She very much approves your kind intention, and rejoices in the circumstance that Providence has made her, as she is, the parent of so well disposed a child. You pay a visit, with your brother, to the object of your charity, when you have sold your fashionable toy; but, by the way, reflect you may keep back some little portion of the value for yourself, and yet relieve the object you compassionate: your brother enters into your design, and promises to say as you do. You come back, and tell your mother you have done your charitable work. "For how much did you sell your ornament," dear daughter, says your mother, pleased that you have laid the value out so well? "For so much," you make answer; and your brother strengthens the assertion: but your mother, who is well acquainted with the worth of things in general, looks at you. You are frightened, and confess the truth; on which she argues with you, in the

language of St. Peter, to the following purport:
“ What, dear children, have you said ? Was
“ not the toy you have disposed of, yours ? And
“ afterwards, when you had sold it, was not
“ what it sold for, your’s ? You have not told
“ a story to your mother only, and affected her,
“ but God has heard you.” “ Oh forgive us !”
you cry out. “ For my part, I can easily for-
“ give you,” says your mother, “ on your promise
“ to repent : but God too must forgive you ;
“ for by such a story you have grieved his holy
“ spirit. Thank his mercy, that you are not pu-
“ nished on the spot as Ananias and Sapphira
“ were, whose story I will show you in the acts
“ of the Apostles.”—Now, we say, dear little
friends, that by proceeding in the manner we
have represented, your untruth was such as did
not injure any one ; for you were free to aid the
pitiable object you relieved, or not ; and yet,
you know how Ananias and Sapphira, from
whose bad behaviour this short narrative is
drawn, were punished for their lie. Proof this
that it involved a species of malignity, of which
they were not conscious, since God’s provi-
dence so quickly overtook them. It is then
your interest to remember the advice of Solomon,
a lying tongue is only for a moment ; and so save
your-

yourselves a world of pains, by always speaking truth. This needs no previous study, no debating with yourself. You have not, and we hope you never will imagine you possess that recollection, which, proverbially speaking, they who deal in fallacies, should have.

Whereas "truth stands in need of no such recollection: it is always ready at our lips," and so forth, as is mentioned in the 352d number of the Spectator. We intended to have quoted in this place the arguments there started, scarcely knowing, when we first began this exhortation, what we should find out to say on such a subject: but we know not how it comes to pass, that when we enter into conversation with our little friends, we are not at a loss for words; but find one sentence is no sooner penned, than it begets another; and the space allowed us for a sermon is too soon filled up. Receive with all the candour of those little ones we write to, these well meant, but trifling tokens of our friendship; and may God direct the words that have been preached at present—to your heart. May his almighty spirit, which is truth itself, dwell in you. May the candour of sincerity be always visibly suffused upon your countenance. May you grow up to years of

understanding and maturity, in favour not with men alone, but God; and may the truth which we have recommended, ripen into that celestial wisdom, which to gain, king Solomon poured out his heart in supplication; and which wisdom, he that is possessed of, shall not be rejected from among the number of his maker's children. Hear us, not alone in this, but all our prayers, thro' Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

I KNOW what Jesus Christ has said;
That from the first of things,
To lie, was Satan's chief delight,
And foremost of his sins.

I know too, for his blessed word,
Has likewise told me so;
That God is truth, which they who love,
To God will surely go.

Then let me love the liars' ways,
If I should like to dwell

With Satan, and his frightful crew
Of reprobates, in hell.

But

But let me constantly speak truth,
If I should like to be
With God, in his resplendent courts ;
His glorious face to see.

There fear, and pain, and grief, and death,
Shall all be done away,
And joy, and bliss, and life exist,
Through heaven's eternal day.

S E R M O N XIII.

O N S I C K N E S S.

I. MACCABEES i. v. 5.

*After these things he fell sick, and perceived that
he should die.*

THIS is told us of that Alexander, who, as in the very chapter out of which our text is taken, we are made to understand, “flew
“many kings, took many spoils, collected
“many armies, and, in short, was celebrated
“as a mighty hero; but, at last, perceived he
“was to die.”—Before, he had not thought of death; for, as the sacred writer says, *his heart was lifted up*: and in this circumstance, how different in every thing his character from that of Abraham, who, for many years before his death, considered that event so much, that he bethought himself of purchasing a burial place! the circumstances of this purchase are minutely mentioned in the twenty third of Genesis; they
take

take up the whole chapter, and are written in a very solemn style.

For further information on the subject, to that chapter we refer; you and here congratulate you, children, on the present happy season of your life, in which, should you be visited with sickness, it would never be imputed to you as a sin, that you had failed to think of death as much as Alexander, or even Abraham: for though Abraham walked with God, yet still, as he was man, he had committed many sins, which sins, in their commission, argued a forgetfulness of death. In sickness, one great duty of the patient is to be indifferent with respect to life and death, in case his sickness should continue; and accordingly, when Jesus wrought a cure on Simon's mother, lying in a fever, it is mentioned, "they," that that is, the people round about her bed, "besought Christ Jesus for her;" she herself did not solicit the recovery she obtained: but in the common sort of men, who having lived to years of full maturity, have such a multitude of sins to answer for, how can we hope to notice this indifference with respect to life and death? Extremely difficult must we confess it, and scarce less than an impossibility, that men, oppressed

beneath the burthen of their sins, should be un-
terrified in sickness, which infers a likelihood
that they may soon be called before the judg-
ment seat of God to answer for them.

But this difficulty, and much less then, this
impossibility does not apply to you, dear com-
pany; for as an infant, born to earthly royalty,
but robbed of his inheritance by rebel subjects
in his cradle, does not in the least lament his
loss; or as a common child, who if it lose its
father or its mother while in arms, as the ex-
pression is, will answer with a smile those who
address it with their sorrowful complainings; so
you, likewise, children, are unterrified in sick-
ness with respect to any of its consequences: you
feel nothing but the pain; while others, tho'
their frame is suffering grievously, have other
circumstances to distract them: they look
backward to the years they have consumed,
and forward to the years of that eternity they
fear will very soon have its beginning; while
the sins of their past life reflect a horror on the
scene before them: but the case, dear little
ones, is far from being so with you; for you
are innocent; and death, which is not dreadful
but by reason of its consequences, has no conse-
quences to alarm you. Let the good man wel-

come

come death with language like the following:
 “ If it separates me from the transient pleasures
 “ of this world, it will bestow eternal pleasures
 “ on me in the world that is so soon to follow:
 “ if it gives my body up a prey to be destroyed
 “ or fed upon by worms, it will invest me very
 “ shortly with a glorious immortality; and if it
 “ tears me from the intercourse of friends, it
 “ will unite me speedily to God.”—Be this the
 good man’s language, yet your conversation, little innocents, upon a bed of sickness, is an edifying lecture to mankind; and some of you, that to our knowledge have addressed your weeping parents to the following purpose, *do not cry, for I shall go to God*, have by that single, but pathetic phrase, replenished their sad bosom, with a joy no disappointment could diminish in the sequel; while the good man’s language rather gives *them* hopes, that gather round him. In the last case, such by-standers have to say,
 “ God’s mercies are immense; the sins our
 “ friend has frequently committed, as we trust,
 “ are blotted out by his repentance;” but those parents, in the first case, have to recommend their little one, not to God’s mercy, but his justice, that has told us heaven is the inheritance of children as their birth-right. “ Go then,

suffering little child of ours; “from the embraces of your parents, go to the embraces of your God: you are no penitent indeed, but you were never on the other hand a sinner.”

Can we, in this part of our discourse on such a subject, fail to think of you, Elizabeth; not that Eliza, whose unhappy fortune has already been known in our discourse upon humility; but that forever blessed Elizabeth, who, some years since, as very possibly a few among you, older than the rest, may well remember;—and if so, we certainly must do so too, for she has sat a thousand times beside us;—that for ever blessed Elizabeth, we say, who, some among you may remember, was, while standing near the fire, and talking to the parent that affectionately loved her, all at once surrounded by the flames. Affrighted, she called out for help: the parent who was standing by, had not the power to aid his burning child, but made, by instinct to the door, intending, we suppose, to get her that assistance, which himself,—had but the tumult in his soul permitted him,—might have extended to her with effect. She followed him, but the devouring fire, no otherwise extinguished than from want of fuel, overcame her, and unable to sustain the agony she underwent,

went, she fell as soon as she had cleared the chamber. The whole house, by this time, was alarmed, and servants came; but their assistance was too late: the fire had spent its fury on her tender frame, which now was totally discoloured; while that countenance, whereon the lily and the rose had reigned together, was parched up to something like a cinder; and not only had the flame laid waste the outward beauty of this lovely temple, but had raged within the building. In a word, she felt it at her vitals. The remains of what she had been scarce two minutes since, were, with much difficulty, put to bed.

And on that bed, poor martyr, and in such a hapless situation, what, among thy other sorrowful complainings, which together were so many that they cannot all be noted in this place, were your last words? We give you, children, but these few; since were we to detail her various observations, every one expressive of implicit resignation to Gods, will,--(for to the last, his gracious providence preserved her reason, notwithstanding the collected agonies she suffered, and she was not of an age to have committed any voluntary sin, of which the recollection could distress her),—we should seem her flatterer,

er, at the moment she was dying; and by dint of speaking in her praise so lavishly, quite overshoot the mark we aimed at, and so virtually say nothing; for you would not credit our assertions; therefore, as already has been hinted, we shall only mention this one lamentation she ejaculated, and not long before her soul departed: *I have heard alas! that patience is a remedy for every sore; and I have many sores about me!* This, dear children, was the lamentation, that of all proceeding from her lips, most favoured of impatience. In that awful moment, when the mighty, and not only when the mighty, but the righteous also tremble, the infirmity she felt *without*, was all the ailment she complained of: but what wonder? She had not yet passed the season of her childhood: she had all the innocence about her, which Christ Jesus, when he graciously embraced those little ones their parents set before him, told them was intitled to his father's kingdom.

This too is your present situation, you that we are now addressing: but it will not always be so; for, as time goes forward, you are every day approaching that maturer season of your life, when vice or virtue will depend upon the resolution you may take of living after such or such

such a manner in the world; and for which vice or virtue, you will therefore be responsible on one hand, or praise-worthy on the other. What then follows, is much rather meant for your instruction at a future period, when your reason and reflection are grown stronger than at present. Hear it therefore; and God grant, that if his providence unhappily should in the sequel visit you with sickness, you may be so happy as to reap advantage from it.

For this lesson, we refer you to the cure already intimated, which was wrought by Jesus Christ on Simon's mother. The account relates, that the Redeemer, drawing near her bed, rebuked the fever, and it left her; upon which she rose, and ministered to her deliverer. What does all this mean, but, in the first place, that as Jesus, being present in the house, restored her, we should have recourse to God in sickness for our cure; and, in the next place, that as Simon's mother, being cured, arose and ministered to her deliverer, doubtless from a principle of gratitude for the inestimable benefit she had received, we too should be solicitous to show the gratitude we are possessed of, to the being, in whose hand, his word instructs us, are the issues, as it says, of life and death, for our

our recovery, if so happy an event takes place. A few brief arguments upon this first part of our duty shall conclude the present exhortation: the remaining part shall constitute our subsequent discourse, upon the blessings of a healthful constitution.

For the present, then, we are to give you some instructions on your duty to consider God as a resort, when you are visited with sickness.

God is, in reality, the being by whose will, that is by whose permission, tho' not very likely, order, every thing in this world comes to pass. Of this the psalmist was so well convinced, that when in danger, as he was, of losing both his sceptre and his life, in consequence of Absalom's unnatural treason, and when Zadok, with a few of his remaining faithful friends, had joined him, to make good their flight, and bore the ark too with them, as a pledge from God for the security of their liege sovereign, he addressed them to the following purport. " Carry back
" the ark into the city; if I have found favour
" in God's sight, he will most surely bring me
" back, and give me not alone to visit that,
" but likewise his most holy habitation.
" Should he, on the other hand, however, say
" I take no pleasure in thee, here I am: let
him

“ him dispose of me as he thinks fit.” So little ones, in future, should God’s providence make you acquainted with a bed of sickness, say you likewise, to those parents, to those brothers, to those sisters, to those other kin’, and to those friends that may be gathered round your bed of sickness; “ You have all your commendable
“ views and motives in thus weeping round
“ me, and thus wishing my recovery. You
“ first bore me, in your womb, dear mother,
“ and in anguish gave me life. You have been
“ always lavish of your tenderness, and cannot
“ clamly see me sundered from your kind
“ embraces. You, dear father, have at all
“ times loved me with a rational affection;
“ you have spent a little fortune on my edu-
“ cation, and had hopes the time would come
“ when I should prove myself the pillar and
“ support of your old age; and you, dear bro-
“ thers, and dear sisters, dear relations, and
“ dear friends, we have been long with one
“ another, and a separation that takes place
“ between companions is at all times painful:
“ therefore you do well to weep: but I should
“ have no other view than that, on all occa-
“ sions, of promoting the Almighty’s glory,
“ and submitting to his pleasure. To that
“ pleasure I *will* be submissive. Shorten
“ then,

“ then, my days, oh God, if thou thinkest fit ;
 “ for long enough shall I have lived, if dying, I
 “ become entitled to salvation, and am only
 “ sundered from this world, that I may be
 “ united in another world to thee ; for as St.
 “ Paul expresses human resignation*, are not
 “ you, dear father, and dear mother, parents of
 “ my flesh ; and notwithstanding you have fre-
 “ quently corrected me, yet still have I behaved my-
 “ self, I trust, with reverence to you : how much
 “ more then should I not approve myself resigned or
 “ subject to God’s hand, when he corrects me ?
 “ for you verily, no doubt, have sometimes chas-
 “ tened me in anger ; pardon me, dear parents,
 “ have you not, and often from a hasty dis-
 “ position, rather than for my advantage ;
 “ while God chastens me at all times for my be-
 “ nefit, that I may be in time partaker of his
 “ holiness.”

Here some, perhaps, at present, listening to
 us, with you, will remark upon us ; saying, We
 put such a language, little ones, into your lips,
 as, at this present season of your life at least,
 your hearts can never be supposed to join with.
 The remark will be but true ; and therefore,
 do we not produce it as a language suited to

* Hebrews, xii. v. 9. 10.

the present season of your life; though if we did, what would it be but imitating Eli in the first of Samuel, the third chapter, verse the tenth, who, when the little Samuel thrice came to him, and would have it that the good old man had called him, found at length it was God's voice; and therefore bade him answer, should the call be heard again, *Speak Lord, for I thy servant hear thee.* Eli's view in this was, to habituate Samuel to the notion comprehended in the words he bade him answer. At his tender time of life, he could have no precise idea of the service God expected from him. What, then, was the consequence? You know as well as we do. Samuel spent his life in the Almighty's service. May the same good consequence, dear children, wait on our endeavours towards habituating you betimes to such a spirit of submission under God's afflicting hand, when you are visited with sickness.

And with this we would conclude our exhortation; but the subject we have preached on, turning our reflection on the present situation of the times, that is to say, on the unhappy sickness of the father of his people, can we finish, and not pour out our desiring hearts in supplication before God, to whom, particularly,

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larly, the afflicted and the sick belong? Oh father of all nature, condescend to cast thine eye on yonder habitation, lately the abode of rational, because domestic, joy, beneath whose roof a blooming offspring were so happy; but to which a nation now direct their longing eyes for the recovery of their common father. May the wing of thy protecting favour be stretched out upon him. Grant that, as till now thou hast established, for our benefit, his throne in righteousness, his heart may, in the trying moments of affliction, be established in thy peace. We would approve ourselves sincerely grateful for the blessings we have hitherto received beneath his government; nor do we now solicit any blessing for ourselves. Grant, therefore, that whatever may be found consistent with thy glory, and, of course, his happiness, may be accomplished in him. Gladly would we, by our supplication, bring one blessing down upon the person of that unassuming man, whose rule has hitherto evinced him tenderly desirous to forego the title and deportment of a sovereign, in the name and functions of a father. Thou canst see, oh God, on this occasion, how united are the wishes of his people. Hear us, there-

fore;

fore; and if perseverance in the act of prayer be necessary to obtain the blessing we request, give us the grace to persevere in prayer that we may gain the blessing he most stands in need for the sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

IN all the sicknesses I know,
To thee, oh God, that here below
Can'st save, and none but thee,
(Since medicine if it do me good,
Does, at thy pleasure, what it should),
For succour will I flee.

Then view me with a pitying eye,
On a sick-bed whene'er I lie;
And from thy holy place
Cheer my sick frame,—or to endure
The pain thou think'st not fit to cure,
Endow me with thy grace.

The

So, if devoutly I sustain,
 Young as I am, my body's pain,
 As suffer'ing for thy sake,
 Some compensation for the sin
 Lodg'd from the womb, my heart within,
 Shall I not fail to make.

THE H. Y. M. N.

IN all the business I know,
 To thee, O God, that here below
 Can I give, and none but thee
 (Since nothing else is done good,
 Does at all please, what it should)
 For favour will I see.
 Then view me with a pitying eye,
 On a sick-bed where'er I lie,
 And from thy holy place
 Cure my sick frame, or to endure
 The pain thou think it not fit to cure.
 Endow me with thy grace,
 The

SERMON

S E R M O N XIV.

ON HEALTH AFTER SICKNESS.

LUKE viii. v. 38, 39.

Now the man, out of whom the devils were departed, besought Jesus that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying, return to thine house, and say how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.

WE take these devils, Jesus, by his power, drove out of the possessed here spoken of, to stand for any common sickness; and, in such a case, the text will be a striking lesson for mankind not only to be grateful for recovery from a state of sickness, but to shew their gratitude in such a manner as they ought.

For when the man thus cured, besought Christ Jesus to allow of his abiding with him, this was gratitude: he seemed desirous of devoting the remainder of his days to a religious life,
and

and following ever afterward the blessed author of his cure: but Jesus Christ, undoubtedly reflecting he had duties to discharge in civil life, or for some other reason, would not suffer such a step, but bade him show his grateful disposition in another way, by going home, where he should show how great a blessing he had recently received from God. The man accordingly obeyed, and went his way, that he might publish through the city what great things the Lord had done in his behalf, how he had taken pity on his misery, and healed him.

Such too was the gratitude evinced by Simon's mother, introduced in our preceding exhortation, who, when cured by Jesus, rose and waited on him.

Learn then, little ones, to imitate both these examples, when recovered from the sickness that beforehand may have long detained you; and believe us, you have more occasion, than perhaps you think you have, for exercising gratitude, even though you should not have been visited by any actual illness, since the state of childhood is a state particularly subject to complaint and ailment; so much so, that the Almighty's providence is seen in nothing more than in the preservation of young children.

Child-

Childhood is, in some sort, a continued state of sickness; with this single difference, that the little patient does not keep his bed or room. A thousand accidents, indeed, may happen to grown people; but the vessels of a child are so extremely delicate and tender, his whole frame so fine, and so forth, that it seems a wonder how he can escape (to instance one of many maladies that may befall him) the first cold he gets. If he were well acquainted with the structure of his body, he would apprehend, with reason, the next time he coughed he should, infallibly, be shaken all to pieces, and his veins burst in him.

Our preceding exhortation recommended a resort to God when you were visited with sickness: but this duty, generally speaking, is confined within a very narrow space, because the time of sickness, generally speaking, is of no duration; but it is not so, dear children, with the gratitude you ought to manifest, when you recover from past illness. Gratitude is, in reality, a duty to be paid as long as we remain in health; that is, exclusive of a very little space of time, as long as we have life. This gratitude to God for health, supposes an accompanying abstinence from sin; for Jesus, meeting one he had

the day preceding cured of an infirmity, said to him, *thou art now made whole: see, therefore, that thou sin no more, lest something worse befall thee.* Hence, then, it is manifest, that sin is, in reality, the cause of all those multiplied disorders that infest the human frame. There cannot be a doubt, dear children, but that sin occasions every evil in the world: of course, then, if the gratitude we owe to God for our recovery from a bed of sickness, comprehends an abstinence from sin, in such a case, by being grateful, we not only make some species of atonement, or amends, for our past sin, but save ourselves from future illness: for if sin, the cause of illness, be removed, the effect will cease of course.

Alas! the greater part among you cannot have so perfect a conviction on the subject of this duty to be grateful for that blessing we call health; as some poor children have; because you have not yet been visited with sickness. Thus it is with all God's blessings; and, however strange the assertion may be thought, God's goodness is the cause of our ingratitude to God for all the good he does us; or at least of our unmindfulness to thank him as we ought. You have, from day to day, your stated meals; you have

have not therefore any notion of the misery too many children undergo, that cannot get a meal. You are completely covered with warm raiment: therefore are you much less capable of knowing what *they* feel in winter, who have scarcely wherewithal to hide their nakedness: but, though from being blessed with all good things yourselves, you do not turn your thoughts upon the case of such as are without them, *that* can be no reason, why you should not do so. Now in all the blessings of the world, excepting that of health, a contrast of those blessings to the opposite defects, leads naturally to the exercise of charity: whereas a contrast of the blessing, health, with sickness, naturally leads to temperance, sobriety, and other habits that conduce to health.

From such a motive as the following, would to God, dear children, we could raise a proper notion in you; of your duty to be grateful for the benefit of health, bestowed upon you from your infancy; since then, we should not have one fear of working on you to perform that duty: for take notice what a difference exists between the characters of those who fail in the performance of this charity, and such as are deficient in the article of temperance, sobriety,

and other virtues like them: for the first are only wicked; but the latter, wicked, and without a proper understanding likewise. To be understood in this, let us suppose as follows: that a man omit to practise works of charity, compassion, and benevolence, what is he? wicked, we must own: but, as we said but just this moment, *only* wicked: but suppose a man possessing a good constitution from his childhood, but neglecting to live temperately, soberly, and so forth, what must he be called? Is he a wicked man? Undoubtedly: for wicked, tho' it be to shorten the existence of another, it is no less wicked, by a want of caution in the article of living, to cut short one's own existence; since no more can we give being to ourself, than any other person. He, then, acting as just now we have supposed, is wicked; but is such a person only wicked? No; but foolish likewise. What then shall be said of him, who having felt the misery of any malady, but being by God's mercy perfectly restored, goes back to those excesses that occasioned his first malady? He must be doubly wicked; and not only that, but doubly foolish likewise. Yield to such a motive, tho' it be but of a human nature, and abstain from sin on your recovery from a fit
of

of illness, which is comprehended in the gratitude of him, who in the text was dispossessed by Jesus of so many devils. Yield we say, to such a motive, from the fear of being thought defective both in virtue and good sense: this policy or cunning happily may afterwards induce you to perform that charity and so forth, which, if you neglect, you will be only wicked.

One more observation in the present part of our discourse: this charity is such a virtue, that it gains us the good will and approbation of our fellow creatures: therefore, if we do not properly discharge it, we forego, by such omission, the good will and approbation of all those we have to do with; and experience something like a punishment upon the spot: of course, considering matters in a worldly sense, we may or may not practise charity, benevolence, compassion, or the like, as we would wish to have, or go without their recompence: but *he* is totally deprived of all excuse, who fails in temperance, sobriety, and so forth; since high living, with the love of liquor, and such other vices, ruin every individual's health: and there is no one so infatuated, but he looks on health as something very comfortable in itself, and would do all

things to preserve it, if his pleasures did not intervene to thwart him.

Consequently, when we bid you shew a charitable disposition, when we bid you imitate the good Samaritan, who, lighted from his beast, bound up the wounds of that poor Jew, who was not of a nation he could lawfully have any dealings with, and bore him to an inn, that he might get the host to tend him, we do nothing else than wish you to provide for your own happiness, on peril, not of being wretched as to matters in this state of being, but of losing so much happiness as in another world is promised: now this happiness not being visible, may therefore very possibly be lightly prized; whereas, when we instruct you to be temperate and the like, we do much more than in the former case, since we instruct you to provide for your own happiness, on peril of enduring every wretchedness in life, of which, as men have many visible examples every day before them, they offend against good sense, by living so as to bring down such wretchedness upon them, not to mention what will be the consequence hereafter. And, dear children, would to God we could convince you of the misery inherent to a sickly constitution, by producing
one

one before you, whose consumptive frame, and broken voice, might be your monitor : by such means, we should teach you more upon this article, than if we were to draw you up a thousand exhortations.

Be you grateful, therefore, for recovery from the sickness you may be afflicted with : that is, abstain in future from the sins, or from the want of caution that before were the occasion of your illness : wait not to be thoroughly convinced of the importance of that blessing, health, till you are made acquainted with it, by a knowledge of its loss. It would be well for many, if a want of health, when they are bowed beneath it, were the only misery oppressing them : but, on the other hand, a broken constitution is the mark in general of a vicious life ; the weakness of the body is an indication of the sickness of the soul ; and they who have their lives abridged or shortened, are but hurried from this state of being, to make answer in another for the sins they have committed.

In the perpetration of this sin, what have not been their malversations ? Every limb has been converted from its proper office ; and instead of being occupied in the praise-worthy work of gloryfying God, has laboured to provoke

him. *Hitherto*, says the apostle Paul, *as you have rendered up your bodies servants to uncleanness and iniquity, yield up your bodies now to righteousness*: for what can be more equitable, than that having hitherto employed your tongue perhaps, in taking the Almighty's name in vain, as is expressed in the commandments, you should henceforth use it in the act of blessing the Almighty? that, till now, so diligently having carried up and down the livery of the world, together with the pomp and pride of riches on your body, you should henceforth wear the modesty of Jesus Christ with his humility? that having set your body up in some sort as an idol to be worshipped, you should dedicate your body, for the future, to God's worship? and that having vilified your understanding, by employing it on contemplations utterly unworthy of its immortality, you should, for the remainder of your life, devote it to the study of such objects as become its immortality, according to the same apostle's precept; *glorify the great creator, in your body, and your spirit, which are his?*

We cannot end this exhortation without one remark: that notwithstanding health must be considered as a blessing, sickness is in many cases, not less so; and more particularly when befalling
those

those who will not see the Almighty in his loving kindnesſes. Thoſe ought not to complain ſo much when God's afflicting hand is laid upon them; for a perfect ſtate of health muſt be confeſſed ſo very charming, that too many men, if they have only *that*, have every worldly joy in their poſſeſſion: and in ſuch a ſtate of temporal good things, are they ſo very likely to reflect upon the good things of another world? Nay, does it not, at times, pervade the imagination of ſuch men, that the idea of another world is all a fooliſh notion? In the height of their ſound health, they are induced to fancy it a recompence of their good conduct: they conſider, that among the many evils of this life, they ſhould have leſs good health, if they had leſs integrity; and that the Almighty muſt be certainly well pleaſed with them, ſince they have ſuch good cauſe to be well pleaſed with him.

Such are the thoughts they entertain when health appears in every region of their countenance: but ſee them on a bed of ſickneſs, and what then will very likely be their thought? The language they may then be brought to utter, will inform us: for if any thing can work a cure in their ideas, ſickneſs will; and by de-

grees, like Hezekiah, in the eight and thirtieth of Isaiah, they will probably be brought to hold communion with themselves, as follows: *I shall be removed from hence, as speedily as shepherds strike their tents, and go from place to place.* Exactly like the dove he speaks of, will they meditate upon the greatness of their sins; and as a swallow or a crane expects its mother, but which does not come, *their eyes will fail with looking upward:* To their terror, will succeed ideas of religion, hope or trust; and if God's grace but sanctify their sickness, they will come at last to say: *Behold, for peace I was distressed with bitterness; but God, in his affection towards my soul, has snatched it from the pit, and cast my sins behind him: therefore will I sing my song of thanks upon a stringed instrument of music, in his holy place, while I have being.* This must be the probable effect of sickness with such men; for sickness is more likely to induce so salutary an effect than health; their body's health or pleasure, in a word, is to their souls a state of sickness or distress; and only by a sickness or distress of body, can their souls be visited with health or pleasure.

With respect to you, dear little friends, this notion, that the blessing, health, is fatal to so many,
while

while their only safety is in sickness, ought not to afflict you ; for the good things of the world can never be pernicious, till such time as we have grievously abused them. Carry, therefore with you, on your journey forward in the road of life, that innocence which is peculiar to the present season of your childhood ; and not only, then, will sickness seldom be your portion, but a state of health will prove the greatest earthly blessing you can be endowed with. May you never know the afflicting hand of God in sickness ! May your song in childhood, youth, and man, or womanhood, when human beings are most likely to exclaim with David, *In my prosperous state, I said, I never shall be moved*, although they do not add with David, *thou, O Lord, hast made my hill so strong*,—in childhood, youth, and man, or womanhood, we say, dear children, may your song addressed to the Almighty be the same as David's, namely “ Through thy
“ mercy, oh my God, have I been holden up
“ continually, ever since the moment of my
“ birth ; and thou art he who took me out of
“ my dear mother's womb : my praise shall be
“ for ever of thee : ” and not only this, but when the time of your declining state draws nigh, may you, with David, likewise say : “ my flesh

“and heart both fail me;” or, in other words,
“I see all perish round about me, and within,
“begin to feel decay; but thou, oh father, of
“all creatures, art my flesh and my heart’s
“strength, together with my lot and portion
“through eternity:” and in this season of my life,
I see that hill, of which thy mercy has so deeply
settled the foundations, every day grow stronger
still. Be this, dear children, all your suppli-
cation, boast, and glory; and thro’ life may you
encounter no affliction, nor in death regret the
empty pleasures of the world; but be convinced
that such a time is come as will invite you to
exchange the transient entertainments of this
world, for the eternal glories of another; and
impressed by such conviction, may you say to
those about you, with a woman, one who was
the preacher’s mother, *When you see my last
breath go, praise God on my account.* So be it
for the sake of Jesus Christ, &c.

THE

THE HYMN.

MY bosom glows :
With joy my senses bound :
My spirits run their round :
My blood o'erflows ;
And at my eye all blithe and glad,
Pleasure looks out in smiles new clad.

Not lately so :
For languid droop'd my head :
All joy was from me fled :
My pulse beat low :
Quench'd almost was my vital flame,
And death's chill hand had seiz'd my frame.

Who then has wrought
Within me such a change ?—
To know, I need not range
Through many a thought :
It was the God who all sustains,
That has pour'd health into my veins.

Let

Let me then shew
My sence of such a gift :
And grateful praises lift,
From earth below,
My soul to him that rules above
For so much overflowing LOVE.

SERMON XV.
ON GOOD FRIDAY.

ROMANS IV. v. 25.

Who was delivered for our offences.

OUR discourse on Christmas-day informed you, dear companions, of the several matters needful, in our notion, to the knowledge of the plan by which Christ Jesus took upon him to redeem mankind from sin; and brought the story of it down to the Redeemer's birth. In this discourse, and that which follows it, we shall pursue the history, 'till Jesus died upon the cross; explaining what he taught, and by what miracles he proved so fully his divinity; as also what those miracles were meant to teach us: for unlike the miracles of Mahomet, and other such impostors, who have instituted what they called *religions*, and whose miracles were only proofs of power, even had they been effected, those of Jesus Christ have all a moral,

moral, and assist his doctrine greatly. All these miracles, when we have travelled thro' the history of our Saviour's life, or thro' a part thereof, we shall relate together, and as near the order they were wrought in, as we can; altho' their order is a matter of but trifling consequence.

First then, when he was eight days old, his parents brought him to Jerusalem, and had him circumcised; for Jesus Christ was to accomplish the whole law of Moses, being, as he was, a Jew: but in the law of Moses, it was ordered that a lamb should be the sacrifice; or if the parent were so poor, she could not offer up a lamb, that then she should present two pigeons; which accordingly the mother of Christ Jesus offered, who was very poor: for, little friends, you will discover that in every action of the Saviour's life, this poverty appeared, because the faith of christianity was to be propagated by the poor, that God alone might be confessed the author of it.

Jesus Christ was king, as you have often heard it mentioned, of the Jews. Now Herod was appointed tetrarch, that is, sovereign of Judea, which the Jews inhabited; on which account, he feared that Jesus, when grown up

to man's estate, would spoil him of his empire. He determined therefore to destroy him; and enquiring where he should be born, was told in Bethlehem. To Bethlehem, he therefore sent wise men, as they were called, pretending, that when they had found him, he would also come and be a worshipper. But these wise men were warned by the Almighty in a dream, and did not bring him back the tidings he so wanted; he was therefore much enraged, and sent forth soldiers to kill every infant child in Bethlehem; of which number he supposed the object of his jealousy would be: but God, beforehand, in another dream, had warned his parents to depart for Egypt; so that Herod's bloody purpose, with respect to Jesus, was prevented: and it was not till the death of Herod that his parents, being once more warned by God, returned with Jesus, and established their abode at Nazareth, in Galilee; that so the prophecy might be fulfilled, which said "he shall be called a Nazarene."

Twelve years of the redeemer's life elapsed before the Testament again makes mention of him; but at that extremely tender age, when he was at Jerusalem, to which his parents every year were used to go, that they might eat the passover, he stayed behind on their return,

turn, and entered into disputation with the doctors in the temple. It was no long time before his parents missed him, and came back. When he was found, they taxed him with a fault in thus afflicting them : but he replied, *Why did ye seek me? Knew ye not I must perform my father's business?* After this, however, he returned with them, and showed himself a dutecous son, *increasing*, as the scripture says, *in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour both with God and man.*

Here eighteen other years go by, when Jesus, who had entered now upon his thirtieth year, or nearly so, was to begin his ministry. Accordingly, about this time, St. John the Baptist, who was nearly of an age with Jesus Christ, and ever since his birth had made his habitation in the desert, showed himself as what was called our Lord's fore-runner, to prepare men's hearts for his reception. So divine a personage as our redeemer, could not but require a singular forerunner; and the Baptist was no common man; for he was poor, as all the followers of Christ Jesus were, and had besides his raiment of a camel's hide, while what he lived upon were locusts and wild honey. All the people of Judea hurried to the wilderness,

ness, where John baptised them ; and the Priests and Levites from Jerusalem came likewise to inform themselves who this new character could be ; for all the Jews about this time expected the Messias, and supposed it might be John, tho' they imagined he would come in power and grandeur, like an earthly prince : but John denied that he was the Messias ; in comparison with whom, he openly professed himself so much the inferior, that he was not worthy to stoop down and loose his shoes. With this reply, the Priests and Levites left him ; and next day, Christ Jesus came himself to be baptised ; whom John beholding, instantly declared he was the very personage he had the day before been speaking of. At first the Baptist, on account of his unworthiness, would not baptise the Saviour ; but the Saviour told him it was meet he should fulfil all righteousness ; for we must tell you, little friends, that for the future, baptism was ordained to set aside the painful rite of circumcision ; and Christ Jesus gave an instance of obedience in himself. Christ Jesus having made this answer, John baptised him ; and behold ! as he was coming up out of the water, his almighty father's spirit, in the likeness of a dove, descended on him ;
and

and a voice from heaven informed the standers by, that Jesus Christ was his beloved son. Now this descent of the almighty's spirit on Christ Jesus, had been previously revealed to John the Baptist, as a sign by which he was to know the Saviour.

Jesus being thus replenished with his father's spirit, or, as scripture says, the Holy Ghost, of which this baptism, that is dipping, tho' by reason of the tenderness of infants, we now only sprinkle them with water, is a type or token, was compelled or driven into the wilderness, that he might enter on his ministry by giving us a rule for our behaviour under all temptations; which temptations, as so often they assail mankind in life, Christ Jesus has inserted in that blessed prayer he taught us, namely: *lead us not into temptation*; or as some, with more propriety translate it, "leave us not when we are tempted."

Jesus therefore having fasted forty days when in the wilderness, at last grew hungry; and the tempter taking this occasion to seduce his virtue, or be certain who he was (for what he had in view we do not fully know), came to him, saying: *if in truth thou be the son of God, convert these stones to bread*: but Jesus told him

it

was written: *man should not subsist by bread alone, but every word proceeding from God's mouth*: by which he meant to teach mankind that in the time of poverty, which poverty is undergone by multitudes that hardly can get bread to eat, they must not think they may supply their wants by any mode in opposition to the will of God.

The tempter, finding his first effort fruitless, next proceeded by that power which, as a spirit, he possessed, to waft Christ Jesus thro' the air, and place him on the summit of a lofty mountain, round about whose basis every kingdom in the world, with all its glory, was extended. Pointing out this prospect, he assured Christ Jesus, " he would give him what he saw, provided he fell down upon his knees and worshipped him:" but Jesus answered; *it is written thou shalt worship God, and serve him only*: and by this he meant to teach us, that no hope of bettering our condition in the world, which is a powerful motive with the generality of men, should tempt us to enrich ourselves by what his providence does not allow.

The evil spirit having failed in this temptation too, had now no more than one remaining: and accordingly, he bore Christ Jesus to
a pin-

a pinnacle or steeple of the temple at Jerusalem, and said: *leap hence at once; for being such a holy man, thou hast no hurt to fear: for David tells us, God shall give his angels charge of every virtuous character, and in their hands they shall support him, lest he dash his foot against a stone;* but Jesus here again, made answer, saying: *get thee from me, Satan; for as well too is it written in God's word: thou shalt not tempt the lord.* And saying this he meant to teach us, that mankind are not to try how far the providence of God will go in saving them from dangers, which they never need expose themselves to undergo.

With this, the trial ended: Satan being baffled, left Christ Jesus; and in approbation of his virtue, God sent angels to support and comfort him.

Our Saviour, after this, called several disciples; and began to preach repentance. Of his preaching, Matthew has recorded a whole sermon. It informs us who are blessed; the poor in spirit, meek and merciful: the afflicted, pure in heart, and those promoting peace among mankind: it mentions, that the preacher, or Christ Jesus came not to abolish, but fulfil the law of Moses: it explains who those are that transgress

transgress the sixth and seventh commandments: tells us what it is to swear: exhorteth us to suffer wrong: to love our enemies, give alms in secret: it contains a form of prayer, describes a proper way to fast: advises us to entertain no over-anxious cares for worldly things; and puts us on our guard against rash judgment. After this, at different times, young children were brought to him: he received and blessed them. He evinced his gracious disposition in relation to the adulterous woman, whom the Jews had brought before him; for he bade all those that had accused her, if themselves were void of sin, to stone her: but they felt their consciences rebuke them; and withdrawing from the place, they left the woman with Christ Jesus, who was satisfied with bidding her depart, and *sin no more*. He took occasion on another opportunity, to let his hearers know that God accepts our alms, if they are only in proportion to our means; by saying, that a certain widow, who had just before put two small mites into the treasury, had cast in more than many wealthy people, who had given much; because the first had offered all her living, and the last a very trifling part of their abundance. On his journey
through

through Samaria, the inhabitants of which were hated by the Jews, and these by them, he entered into conversation with a harlot at the well called Jacob's, begging her to give him drink out of her vessel; and so wrought upon the woman's heart, in consequence of what he said on her refusal to oblige him, being as he was a Jew, that he converted her, and many of her countrymen to God. These condescending services, and many more, did Jesus, for the space of three whole years, perform; but often took occasion to upbraid the Scribes and Pharisees with their hypocrisy, who, therefore, and because the mean appearance of the Saviour scandalized them, stirred up the whole Jewish nation to destroy him.

It is now high time we should present you with a brief enumeration of the Saviour's miracles: his first was that of turning water into wine, at the solicitation of his mother, when they wanted liquor at a marriage feast, where both himself and she were present. Possibly there may not be a moral couched beneath this miracle, which hardly can be said concerning any of the rest: it was however necessary, since the feast stood still, for want of wine; and possibly our Lord might think this opportunity

no inconvenient one of manifesting, for the first time, his divinity to man.

The miracle that may be placed next this, is, when he still'd a tempest, which would otherwise have sunk the ship in which himself and his disciples were. He raised from death the daughter of one Jairus, in authority among the Jews. He drove a legion, that is, swarm of devils, out of two unhappy men, and let the devils enter into and possess a herd of swine, then feeding not far off; on which the herd ran violently down a precipice, and perished in the sea: and this was done perhaps to punish those who did not keep the law of Moses, that prohibited the Jews from having any thing to do with swine's flesh. He restored to health a multitude of people, not refraining from so good a work, upon the sabbath, which the Jews affected to take umbrage at: but Jesus shewed them that all works of charity might be performed on such a day, which, as he said, was made for man. He had been preaching to five thousand men; besides the women and the children with them, and considering they were far from home, in his compassion fed them with no more, as Luke informs us, than five common loaves and two small fishes: but

which loaves and fishes he encreased to such a wonderous quantity, that after all were satisfied, twelve baskets full of broken bits remained. When he had wrought this miracle, he sent the multitude away, and likewise his disciples after, in a ship, while he withdrew to pray: but in the interval the ship was tossed about by waves; and, therefore, Jesus Christ went to them, walking on the water. The disciples seeing Jesus, were afraid, supposing him a ghost: but Peter, full of faith, when Jesus told him it was he, cried out, *If it be thou, oh Lord, let me come to thee on the water:* which he did, and both Christ Jesus and himself came instantly on board the vessel. At the pool, or fish-pond of Bethesda, on the sabbath-day he healed a man that had been eight and thirty years afflicted with a spirit of infirmity: and next day meeting with him, said, *behold, thou art made whole: see therefore that thou sin no more, lest something worse befall thee:* from which words of the redeemer, it is manifest that sin is the occasion even of our bodily distempers. He restored the daughter of a woman who was not a Jewess, after having seemingly rejected her solicitation, saying, he was sent to Israel only, and considered it not meet to fling
away

away the children's bread, that dogs might catch it up; to which she answered: *True; and yet the very dogs may eat those crumbs the children throw away*; which answer so prevailed with Jesus, when he thought of the humility and modesty expressed therein, that he replied as follows: *Great, oh woman is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt*; in consequence of which, her child that very hour was cured.

There are yet many miracles to come, but we have made our sermon long enough already; and shall therefore give you the remainder in our next: the matter being too diffusive for one exhortation. For the present, therefore, we dismiss you, little ones; and may the grace of God so bless those words which have at present been addressed to your attention, that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who was delivered, as the apostle says, for *your* offences; *your* offences we repeat, not actual very probably, but those in which you were conceived, may not be lost upon you, through the same our Lord, to whom, &c.

THE HYMN,

Altered from the SPECTATOR.

WHEN rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelm'd with guilt and fear,
I see my maker face to face,
Oh how shall I appear,

If yet while thy great mercy may
Successfully be sought,
My heart with inward horror shrinks,
And trembles at the thought?

But thou hast told afflicted minds,
Their sins when they lament,
The timely tribute of their tears,
Shall endless woes prevent.

Then view the sorrows of my mind ;
Behold my contrite state ;
And hear my Saviour's dying groans,
To give those sorrows weight.

For

For never shall my soul despair,
Its pardon to secure,
That knows the son of God has died,
To make that pardon sure.

SERMON

S E R M O N XVI.

ON GOOD FRIDAY.

(*Continuation of the preceding.*)

ROMANS iv. v. 25.

Who was delivered for our offences.

WE proceed, without delay, to the conclusion of those miracles the Saviour wrought, no less for our conviction than the benefit of suffering individuals: and the next we are to speak of is, the restoration of the widow's son at Nain, where the youth was carrying out as Jesus came into the village; after this, he fed four thousand people, and such women with their children as attended on his preaching, having scarcely more than when he fed, as we have given you to understand already, the five thousand. Next in order, comes the wonderful draft of fishes, when St. Peter, after having with his partners all night long, employed their nets, and taken nothing, now inclosed so great a number, that
he

he thought his vessel, and another then at anchor by it, would be sunk with such a monstrous weight. Now follows what is called by the disciple who described it, Jesus Christ's transfiguration, in the company of Peter, James, and John; which last, is always called the *well beloved*. Jesus Christ, with these, went up into a mountain, and was suddenly transfigured; or in other words, the form and fashion of his countenance was changed; his raiment suddenly grew white and shining; and there came and talked with him Moses and Elias, on the subject of his death, which he was shortly to accomplish at Jerusalem, though Peter, being fore afraid, and hardly knowing what he said, told Jesus *it was good they should be there*, and prayed his leave to make three tents or tabernacles, one for him, and one for Moses, and the other for Elias. While he was saying this, behold! a cloud came over them; and from the cloud, a voice proceeded, namely: *This is my beloved son*. Thus ended all the glory which had made St. Peter think it good they should be there,

Another miracle, and one that shewed the Saviour's meek submission to the law and higher powers, is shewn us by the circumstance

of tribute money. Certain officers came to him, for a tax imposed on every head : the value of the tax was a *didrachma*, near about the sum of two shillings and six-pence sterling : but Christ Jesus had not wherewithal to pay this tax ; for he was very poor in point of worldly goods ; so poor, that many of the earlier writers living near his time, assert, he lived on charity ; and yet, though he was poor, he would not hold out an example of refusal, lest mankind, from that example, might suppose their want of loyalty to Cæsar, or the reigning prince, would be excused by the Almighty. For that reason, he performed a miracle, by bidding Peter go and cast a hook into the sea ; when he should find a piece of money in that fish's mouth he happened to catch first. He did so, and therewith discharged the tax imposed on Jesus and himself.

To this ensued a miracle that, we shall find, was to be followed by its consequences. There were living in a place called Bethany, one Mary, and her sister Martha, with their brother Lazarus ; and Jesus loved them all. This Lazarus was taken ill ; of which his sister Mary sent Christ Jesus notice : but it seems, he tarried in his way to Bethany ; and so it chanced,

chanced, that Lazarus was dead, and had been buried four whole days before he came. He came at last, however; and repairing to the burial place, shed tears, and groaning in the spirit, raised his voice, that all might hear him, saying, *Lazarus, come forth*: which Lazarus that moment did; and many of the Jews who were spectators of this miracle, believed; but others went and told the priests and pharisees, who long had harboured a desire to kill him for his doctrine, which exposed their vices; and were now exasperated to the utmost by this miracle, which he had wrought on Lazarus; whom, likewise, they desired to put to death. Accordingly they planted spies to watch his conduct at the approaching feast, to which they knew he would come up: for this was a religious act, and Jesus Christ observed the Jewish law with great exactness.

Therefore, after this recovery of Lazarus from death, and many cures performed on sick, blind, lame, and otherwise disabled people, which are not inserted in this exhortation, as unnecessary, Jesus, when the Passover drew nigh, prepared again to eat it in Jerusalem, which he resolved to enter now in triumph; since he knew his death would be accomplished there so shortly.

shortly. His disciples, therefore, having got an ass, they set him on it; and when thus provided, he began his journey, followed and preceded by a multitude; who strewed their garments on the road, or cut down branches from the trees, and shouted all the way: *Hosanna to the son of David! blessed is the king of Israel!*

As his crucifixion now was nigh at hand, he framed himself to meet it as he ought; and having eat the passover in company with his disciples, he was minded after supper to afford them an affecting lesson of humility, and therefore took a towel, girt himself therewith, and washed their feet, exhorting them to do each other the same service: but this condescension was so far from having any influence on the heart of one of his disciples, called Iscariot, that to satisfy his avarice, well knowing how the priests and levites were affected, he conceived the horrible determination of betraying him; and therefore, going out, agreed to do the business for a very trifling sum. Christ Jesus, just before he left the chamber where they were assembled, glanced at the iniquity of his betrayer in the gentlest manner, and was satisfied with bidding him do quickly what he meant: but, not affected by this conduct of the Saviour, he
went

went out, as we have said already, and agreed to execute his treason for the recompence of thirty silver pieces.

While the priests, in consequence of this proposal made them by Iscariot, were preparing to lay hold on Jesus, he was tenderly conversing with the rest of his disciples, and exhorting them to love each other: he informed them that the time was very nigh at hand, when they would lose him. Peter, upon this, began to make profession of the readiness with which he would pursue his master's steps to death; but, on the other hand, his master told him that the cock should not, that very night crow twice, before he had denied he knew him. Yet, he went, he said, beforehand to prepare a place in Heaven, not only for the rest of his disciples but him likewise. He informed them, he himself was to be looked on as the truth, the life, and way to Heaven; assured them that whatever prayer they made to God their father in his name, should certainly succeed; and promised after he had left them, he would send them every one the holy ghost, the comforter, whose future presence should console them in the season of their tribulations.

After

After so affectionate a conversation, he went out with his disciples, crossed a brook, and came into a garden, where, withdrawing from them all, excepting Peter, James, and John, whom he took with him, he went on a little space, and saying, *he was sorrowful to death*, directed them to watch while he poured out his soul in supplication, at a place no great way from them, to which place he pointed. This, no doubt, they promised. Jesus, therefore, having reached the spot, fell prostrate on his face, and prayed to his almighty father, saying, *Oh my father! if it be but possible, let this cup pass me: yet not mine, but thy good will be done!* And having said these words, he rose, and came to his disciples, who he found were all asleep; but framing an excuse for their unkindness, he returned, and being in an agony, he prayed more fervently, while, as St. Luke informs us, he sweat drops of blood; in which condition he was comforted by the appearance of an angel sent from Heaven.

Arising now the second time, he came again to his disciples; bidding them awake, since the betrayer was at hand, which he had hardly mentioned, but Iscariot, with a multitude came forward, and approaching Jesus kissed him, which

which before hand he had told the officers should serve by way of token, to identify Christ's person; upon which, they fell upon him, bound his hands, and were about conducting him to Caiaphas, the then high priest: but Peter, being accidentally provided with a sword, attacked the party apprehending Jesus Christ, and cut off the right ear of one among them.

Jesus Christ, however, far from being pleased with Peter's zeal, reproved his rashness, and did one more miracle, before his death; a miracle that proved his mercy, notwithstanding he was seized on like a felon by the multitude; for he put forth his hand, and healed the wounded person's ear.

By this time they had reached the high priest's palace, into which they entered; Peter following at a distance, and tho' coming in at last, yet not till he had tarried some short time without. Christ Jesus being brought before the judgment seat of Caiaphas, the people, in whose custody he was, blind-folded, mocked and smote him, saying: prophecy who served thee so and so: and Caiaphas beginning to interrogate him, asked if he pretended to be Jesus Christ, the son of God? To which, the Saviour making answer in the affirmative, he was commanded to the procurator, Pilate, who should

should try him for encroaching on the rights of Cæsar, by asserting that himself was lawfully a king. This, they considered was a certain method of destroying him; for being subject to the Romans, they themselves could put no man to death; but in the Roman law, the punishment was crucifixion for denying Cæsar's rights.

To Pilate therefore he was sent: but just before, we should have mentioned, Peter, in the high priest's palace, being three times taxed with following Jesus, was afraid; and three times utterly denied he knew him; upon which the cock, that had already crowed, as Jesus Christ forewarned him, crowed again. Remembering therefore what his master had beforehand said, he left the palace, and went out to weep. This weeping was a sign of his repentance; and accordingly his crime was pardoned in God's sight, whereas the treason of Iscariot, for, hereafter we shall see he was severely punished for it, found no mercy.

Jesus being now before the judgment seat of Pilate, was accused of stirring up the nation to rebellion. Pilate conscious of the people's envy in this matter, would have set him free; and after having unsuccessfully employed all means to do so, thought he should effect his purpose by

re-

reminding them of what was customary at the time of Easter; namely: to release one malefactor; so that, as he added, he would show Christ Jesus grace: but his accusers rather wished the grace might be extended to one Barrabbas, who had been tried and cast for murder in the city; and insinuated, that whoever should show mercy to an enemy of Cæsar, was not Cæsar's friend. At this insinuation, Pilate was afraid of consequences; so that lest his loyalty should be suspected, and his hopes of rising to preferment checked, he gave up the Redeemer to their will, and he was led to crucifixion.

But respecting the betrayer,—he, as soon as Jesus was condemned, repenting of his treachery, went out that instant and threw down, before the priests and elders, the reward with which they had induced him to betray the Saviour, saying: *I have sinned*; and not receiving any consolation from their answer, hanged himself.

The Saviour was by this time crucified: the rulers, who were present at the execution, mocked him; and to aggravate the infamy of the affair, had ordered that two malefactors should be executed with him. In the midst of all those execrations, which, we must suppose, prevailed

prevailed in such a business, Jesus Christ in his demeanour evidenced the greatest gentleness of spirit. *Father*, were his words, *forgive them; for they know not what they do:* and just before he rendered up the ghost, complained that God appeared to have forsaken him; which having said, he bowed himself, and recommending his departing soul to God, expired.

The Jews, when they had thus fulfilled their malice, had now nothing left upon their hands except to guard against the possibility of his disciples coming in the night to steal away the body from the place where they should bury it; for they remembered, he had often said he was to rise again. They went accordingly to Pilate, and informed him of their fears: but Pilate answered, they themselves might set a watch in any manner they thought fit: they did so, and sealed up the stone, which they had laid upon the place where he was buried.

And this, little children, is the whole. Thus was Christ Jesus, the redeemer of mankind, delivered, as the text expresses it, for our offences; and not only ours, but yours, as well; for tho' the assertion may appear a little harsh, and seem to contradict the almighty's mercy, still must we inform you, that his justice

tice is inexorable; and that looking to this justice, there yet never was, nor is, nor ever will be, in the world, a single helpless infant born, with any other title appertaining to him than a child of wrath. The death of Jesus Christ has cleansed you from that sin you were conceived in, and God looks upon the innocence peculiar to your state of childhood, as a circumstance of merit. Give him therefore thanks, that at the time you were not thought of, his abundant love supplied you with a Saviour seventeen hundred years ago, and still supplies you with an intercessor who is always pleading for you. "Oh my father," such may we suppose his supplication, "for those millions that in former ages have laid down their unoffending lives, while they were hardly breathing in the womb, while they were hanging on the breast, or afterward while from their tenderness of understanding they were totally incapable of actual sin, thou hast accepted, of thy grace, that sacrifice I offered up of my own life for the iniquity of all mankind. Accept then of that sacrifice, as well for those who are at present hardly breathing in the womb, or hanging on the breast, or from their tenderness of understand-

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"-ing,

"ing, must be totally incapable of actual sin;
 "and grant, that in no future period of their
 "lives, they may incur the penalty by the
 "commission of that sin, from which since
 "they are now exempt, thou wouldst receive
 "them, should they die at present, into thy
 "abode of happiness: and never may those
 "little hands, on which thou lookest down with
 "pleasure, when they lift them up, and call
 "thee father, as thou art; be lifted up to any
 "other object, than to heaven, and after it
 "has pleased thee to remove them from the
 world, IN heaven." So be it in the name of
 Jesus Christ, &c.

THE HYMN.

THIS day the humble Jesus died,
 To take away my sin,
 And happily re-win
 All I had lost before thro' pride:
 Can this be true?
 Who ever knew
 A love so great
 In one so high, for one in such a low estate?
 Yes,

Yes, oh my soul! the thing is so.
Bless thou God's providence
With ever grateful sense,
And let me, while I breathe below,
From this blest'd day,
In virtue's way
My footsteps train,
Nor be it said, that Christ has died for me
[in vain.

But feeble is my infant mind;
And cannot without grace
Run such an arduous race.
Oh then blest'd Saviour of mankind,
As late, so now,
Plead for me thou,
And if I break
God's laws, say *pardon him, oh father, for my*
[sake,

END OF VOLUME I.

Yes, of my soul, the thing is so,
 Bless thou God's providence
 With every grateful sigh,
 And let me, while I breathe below,
 Praise thee, O God, thy love and grace,
 In virtue's way,
 My Redeemer train,
 Nor be it said, that Christ has died for me
 In vain.

But feeble is my infant mind;
 And cannot without grace
 Run forth an ardent race;
 O thou blest Saviour of mankind,
 As late is now,
 Plead for me thou,
 And if I break
 God's laws, thy pardon give, O Father, for my
 sake.